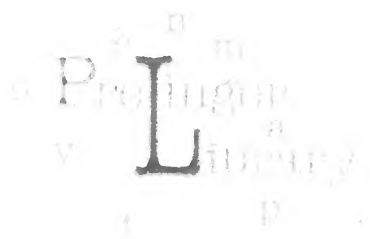
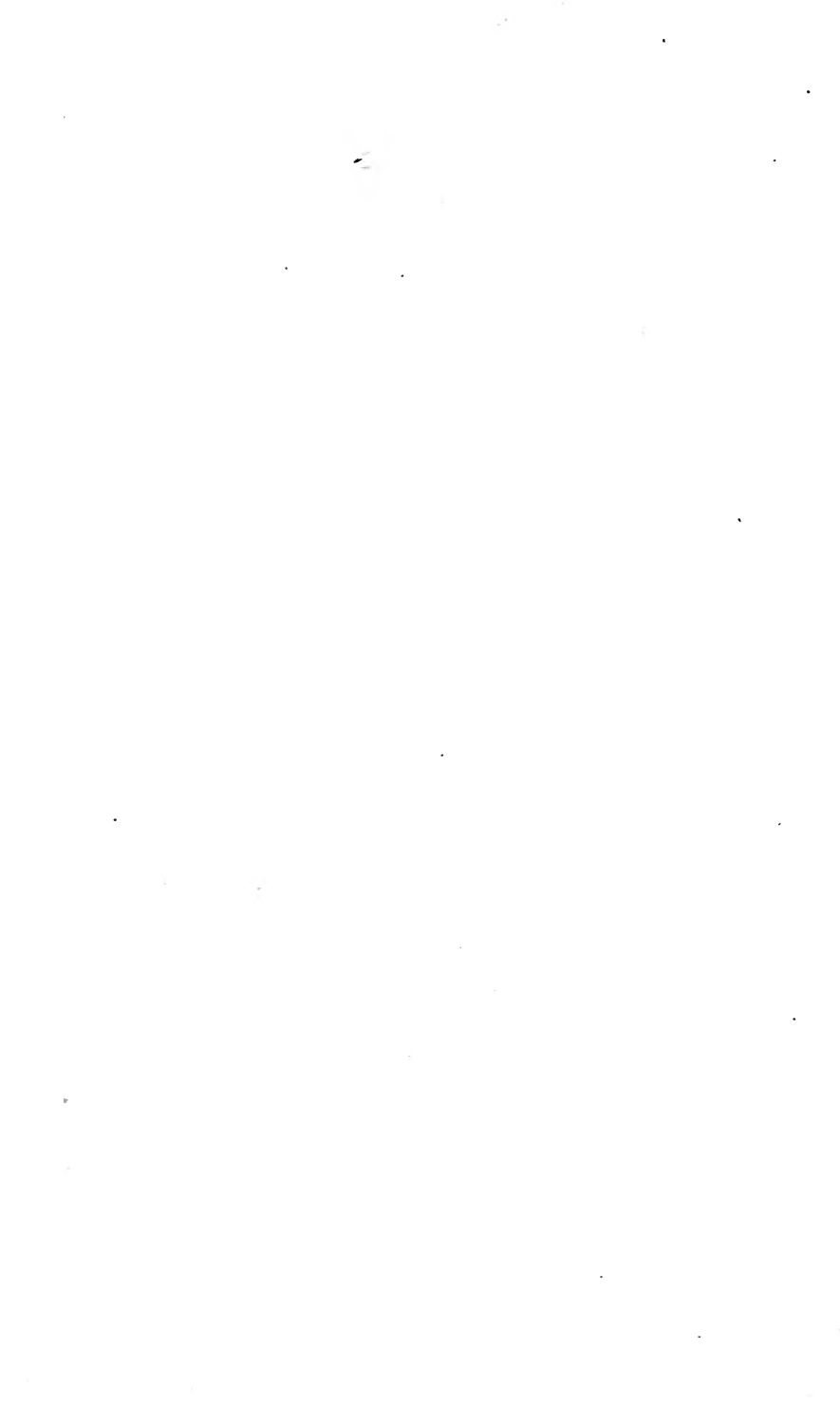


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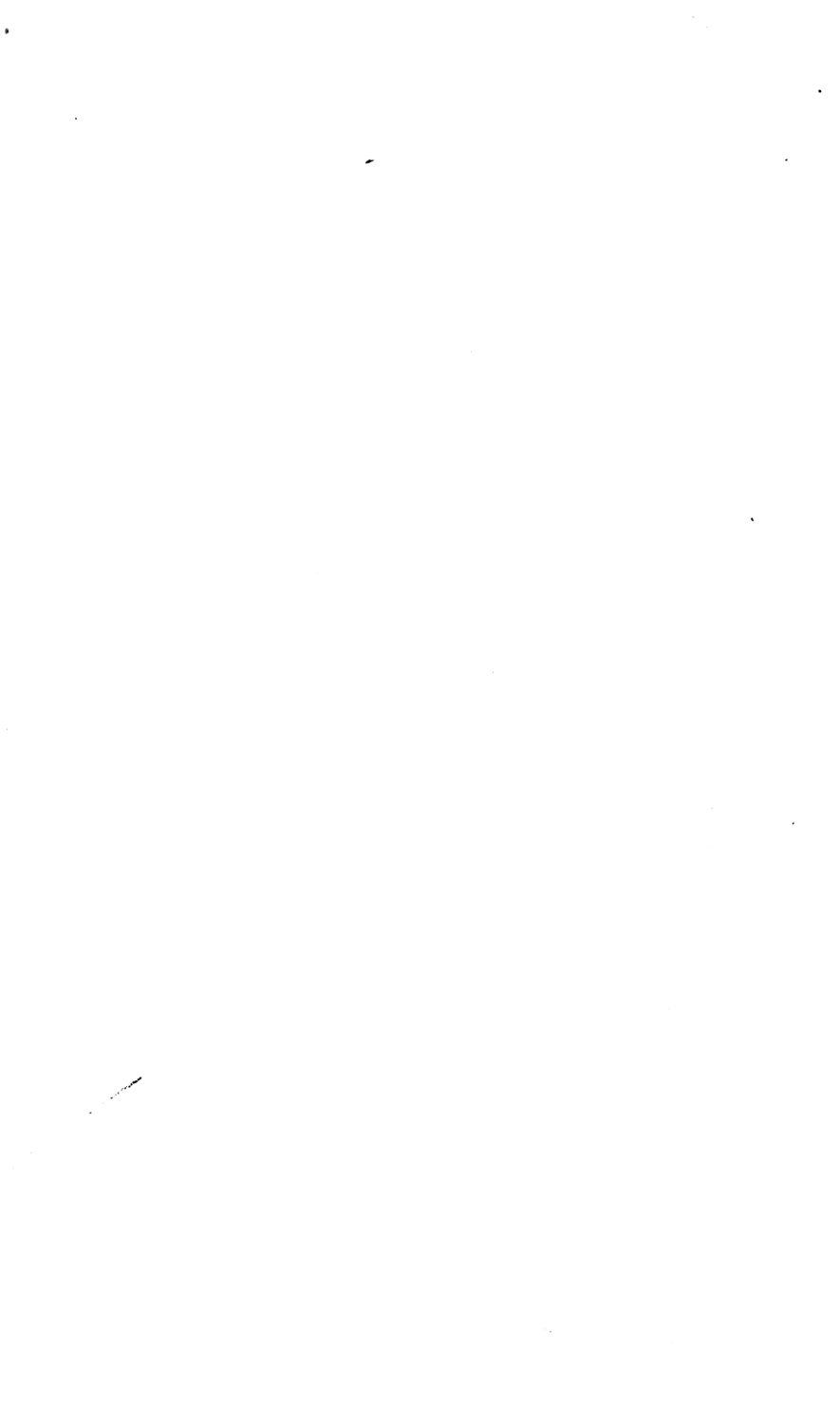


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**A GUIDE  
TO WORLD-HISTORY**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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LONDON, NEW YORK, TORONTO  
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College of the Pacific  
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# A GUIDE TO WORLD-HISTORY

BY

ANDREW REID COWAN

AUTHOR OF

"MASTER-CLUES IN WORLD-HISTORY," ETC.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

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## PREFACE

THE object of this book may best be indicated by explaining briefly how the volume came to be written. As with the majority of people the author's acquaintance with history began at school. But, unlike the majority, he there contracted a taste for the subject which continued when his studies were no longer of a compulsory character. Naturally he was at first concerned with the more heroic and romantic aspects of the subject to be found in our numerous "drum-and-trumpet" narratives. Gradually, however, he came to think that history might really have the "scientific" value so often attributed to it in the literature of the subject. Rightly interpreted could not history throw light on the present and into the avenues of the future? The idea haunted him constantly, and he began reading up not only the most dry-as-dust chronicles, but also every book he could procure relating to the science or "philosophy of history," as it is often called. After many years of almost unremitting study he believed he had garnered quite profitable ideas on general principles. But he still found himself baffled on such points as these: Why did Civilisation originate in relatively infertile countries? Why did the West linger behind the East in culture, but, later, surpass it completely (in mechanics at least, if not in spirituality)? Why were some countries despotic and others "republican"? Was there any "law" in operation regarding the decline and fall of empires, &c., &c.? Continuing to ponder these questions without cessation he, over ten years ago, came to the conclusion that he had made his "system" as complete as he could possibly hope for in his lifetime. He thereupon began airing his ideas before learned Societies and found that his notions were capable of standing the test of highly expert criticism. Emboldened by this fact he

thereupon published a short outline of his ideas in a volume entitled "Master-Clues in World-History." That book had the misfortune to be published only a few weeks before the outbreak of the world war, and, like not a few other studies, suffered instant eclipse in that unprecedented turmoil. Practically the only faults found with the book in the numerous criticisms it had managed to provoke before the actual outbreak of hostilities, were that it was too short, too abstract, too allusive, and wholly lacking in illustrative detail. Recognising the truth of this the author, at the request of many scholars who are his friends, set about the composition of another volume intended not only to expand the principles already handled, but also *apply* them in summary fashion to the salient facts in the life of every country that has cut any considerable figure in history. The result is the present volume, representing another nine years of constant study, composition, and revisal. The work starts with an outline of principles suggested as clues in the interpretation of universal history. In the application of these principles to the broad facts of national life the author was long at a loss. The almost invariable custom of world histories hitherto has been to take up the narrative of one country and complete the story before tackling the chronicle next in order. This habit of leading the reader more or less gently down the stream of time and then suddenly whisking him back to the sources is apt to be somewhat bewildering, and is hardly conducive to the reader "seeing history steadily and seeing it whole." Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, India, China, Japan, Greece, Rome, and other states were all living their lives at the same time if in various ways, and with contacts and reactions which, however feeble, might be of considerable consequence in the making of history. It therefore became the author's object, in applying his principles, to produce as closely as possible that *sense of simultaneity* he had found lacking elsewhere. The "method of parallels" had already been applied to the bald facts of history in such books as Putnam's "Tabular Views of Universal History," where the *static condition* of the whole world can be seen at a single glance by running the eye along the parallel columns. It was not possible to apply this method so easily to



dynamics as to statics. But the author has endeavoured to do so, so far as possible, by grouping his material into *eras*, first of thousands of years and, later, of centuries. A century indeed has become a kind of "historical imperative," so to say. We think of "nineteenth-century England," or France, or Germany, or Japan—visualise these cases as best we may, and so proceed backward or forward along the stream of time, making comparisons probably between the contemporary condition of nations revealed by our scrutiny, as, for instance, in the cases of nearly all the European countries before the outbreak of the French Revolution and during its course. It seemed to the writer well worth while, in applying his principles, to try to keep the conditions of the nations and empires dealt with as well abreast of each other in time as was possible. So, in the present volume, he has adopted the substantially novel method indicated. It may have drawbacks of its own in the way of constant interruption of the narrative, but that may matter comparatively little in a work where details are of far less consequence than general ideas that largely connect up with each other in time and may best be understood in a synchronous setting. It is hoped that the method employed may be as helpful to the reader as it certainly has proved to the writer. As can easily be understood the narrative part of the work deals only in the barest essentials, since a full story would have filled nearly fifty volumes of the present size. Let it be clearly known therefore that the present work is intended merely as a *compass* by which the reader may mainly steer his own way through areas that had necessarily to remain uncharted. It should also perhaps be explained that the author has been less concerned with style than with such scientific precision of statement as he could command. World-history embodies some of the most difficult conceptions imaginable, and it is not always possible to make the issues plain to the man in the street. This work therefore is intended, not for the casual reader, but for students of all degrees of knowledge—for people who, dispensing with popular illustrations and deliberate vividness in style, prefer the search after fundamental principles and their application to the grander traits of nations and empires. Let it be noted in conclusion

that, though many of the considerations outlined in the book are of a negative character, they should still be considered as "guiding" if they save from positive conclusions where these are not yet justifiable. On the other hand the author's conclusions are often of a positive enough kind in what may be considered the realm of opinion. In all these cases, however, they flow directly from the principles sought to be established; for the author, if he were to be really informative, had necessarily to carry his ideas to their logical conclusion. But the last thing the writer desires is to appear dogmatic in indicating what he takes to be the true forces at work in history. He therefore asks the reader to be very vigilant in the scrutiny of the conclusions indicated, since the desire is to make patrons of this volume think for themselves rather than remain uncritically content with the ideas hereinafter vouchsafed. Even should many of the considerations handled throughout be voted unsound, the present attempt at systematisation may help on to better conclusions on the part of readers inclined to follow up historical principles into the last lairs of thought.

Such are the aims, methods, and spirit animating the present volume. Despite the numerous historical conspectuses recently issued, there may still be room for a work informed with rigour rather than rhetoric, and embodying a substantially novel plan of presentation.

ANDREW R. COWAN.

*Ayr, October 1923.*

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# A GUIDE TO WORLD-HISTORY

## PART I

### AN OUTLINE OF PRINCIPLES

1. *Origins in General.*—The Earth which we inhabit is said to be one of the “minor” bodies of the system to which it belongs. Jupiter is the largest of these bodies, being greater than all the other planets combined. That indicates how small our globe is, comparatively speaking. But all the planets in turn are said to represent less than one per cent. of the sun’s mass, while our sun is but a pigmy compared with many of the stars that seem countless in the further universe. It is speculated that our sun was once in a nebulous state, and sprayed out its retinue of planets in its earlier life-history. This theory, however, is now finding less acceptance than formerly, and rival speculations are appearing in the field. But with this and the origin and development of life in general we have really no concern. For history, strictly speaking, has only to do with Man as a *human being*, however he attained that “status.”<sup>1</sup> Regarding that we know really nothing. It is however more and more being credited that man is but a part of the life around him, that he is

<sup>1</sup> World-histories in English are beginning to copy the exhaustive German fashion in starting with the nebular hypothesis and treating of stellar, planetary, and organic evolution, with insistence upon the fact that men are but “blobs of solar energy,” before tackling the recorded or inferential facts of human history. It is suggested that this procedure is mainly irrelevant. It is not so much man’s similarity to organisms in general and their relation to the universe that really matters as the *specific character* of the activities that we regard as “human.” It is these we should wish clearly to understand, dynamically as well as statically. The reader, therefore, will understand why other than strictly “human” origins are so curtly dealt with here.

the last link in the chain of species stretching from "higher" to "lower" until we get back to "primal germs" which may have been inherent in the planetary mass, or wafted to it from stellar distances beyond. But there are many "missing links" in the chain, and we are quite at a loss to say what species our kind should immediately hook on to and how man attained his superiority as "the grand terminal"—if such indeed he be.<sup>1</sup> What it really imports to know is the fact that somehow in the long ago a creature, walking uprightly, acquired a relatively greater and more convoluted brain than its congeners. But whether the upright attitude induced the greater brain, or the greater brain the upright attitude, we are quite at a loss to say.<sup>2</sup> It is common ground, however, that what radically distinguishes man from the brute is the possession of this superior brain. Although that be so, there is still disagreement as to what may be considered the most characteristic expression of the superior organ. It may be well briefly to discuss this point for the purpose of clearing away what the writer considers are essential fallacies in this connection.

2. *Language*.—In scientific literature the assertion may still be met with that it was the gift of Language that lifted man above the brute. But, if Language be defined as the power of communicating emotions and ideas by *sound* (and no other definition seems tenable), then it cannot be denied to the lower creatures, so called. The domestic hen is alleged to have a dozen different sounds to communicate its barnyard ideas; the cow has perhaps more as regards its life in field and stall; apes have still more in their umbrageous condition, and possess in addition great power of gesticulation. Some savage races to-day are declared to have a vocabulary of only a few hundred words, and

<sup>1</sup> In terms of the theory of evolution it cannot well be contended that man is the *last* word in the organic process. Ages hence, perhaps, a category may require to be invented of "supermen" to distinguish them from our race, which is certainly not without "a good conceit" of itself.

<sup>2</sup> Man is not the only erect creature in creation. Some birds (*e.g.* the penguin) are as upright in their walk, if not in their conversation, as man, without having acquired considerable brains as a result. It is notable too that the gibbon, the most erect of the monkey tribe, is much inferior in weight and intricacy of brain to the anthropoid apes who remain stooping in their gait.

they are so dependent upon gesture to eke out their meaning that, when darkness descends upon the scene, comprehension may be quite impossible until the dawn of another day.<sup>1</sup> Even yet the Chinese are said to have only a few thousand root-words in their language, although by change of tone meanings can be multiplied. It is quite possible, as is still contended in some quarters, that Chinese monosyllabism may account to some extent for the "unprogressiveness" of celestial civilisation, although there may be a good deal of hallucination on that point, as we shall see in the proper place. Human language however developed, especially among the "Indo-European" peoples, to a marvellous extent, English being particularly opulent in terms and synonyms. Shakespeare is said to have had the greatest vocabulary ever possessed by a single human being. Indeed, instead of verbal poverty, there is now, in some nations, an actual *embarras de richesses*. However that may be, man's brain power has gone on expressing its superiority in Language, even if the faculty does not radically distinguish him from the brute.

3. *Sociability*.—In addition to the power of speech we have to conceive the human species from the first as having the quality of *sociability*. It is particularly noticeable, however, in this connection that sociability does not exist in the ratio of superior cerebration, but rather the opposite. It is still too often repeated that Man is the "social animal"<sup>2</sup> *par excellence*, and that it was in virtue of this endowment that he rose from savagery (or rather animalism) to civilisation. But the simple fact is that all animals are gifted with what Professor Giddings has happily called "consciousness of kind," without which no society could be formed, either in the vegetable or animal kingdoms. It is this "sympathetic cement," as it has been also called, which holds organisms together in the species and communities which we see in nature. And the plain truth is that, so far from Man being specially sociable in his life, he is in one respect the most *anti-*

<sup>1</sup> Works of travel and anthropology contain many instances of this primitive poverty of speech. Reclus' *Universal Geography* gives many cases in point.

<sup>2</sup> It was Aristotle who declared that "Man is the political animal."

*social* of created things. In the universal struggle for existence individual struggles with individual and species with species. But, in the orders beneath Man<sup>1</sup> and *within the bounds of any given species*, though there may be much fighting for food, for lairs, and (most often perhaps) for females, and sometimes for sheer fun, such fighting is always *individualistic*, and *never organised in mass-form*. Thus one wolf may fight to the death with another wolf at pairing time, or for the titbits of a reindeer's carcass, or over the body of another wolf fallen aside in the communal chase. But one pack of wolves never combines in an organised attack upon another pack. Their mass attacks are against other species. And this moral holds throughout the realm of animated nature, except in the human case. As far back as we can go in history<sup>2</sup> men are seen to combine their numbers for the purpose of attacking other communities as "human" as the aggressors themselves, with the object of material spoil, or, it may be, for domination, or in the sheer lust of blood as happened often in Red Indian annals, and is taking place even now in darkest Africa. Indeed, human society is "polarised" in a fashion that is altogether unique. One end of a village contemns or hates the other end simply perhaps because the inhabitants live east and west of each other, or north and south. Union, however, may accrue to such a village should the matter at stake be a question with a neighbouring village, a new disdain or hatred forming the "sympathetic cement" for a larger aggressive combination on the part of the originally opposed groups. And so what have been aptly called "the pleasures of malignity" manifest themselves upon an ascending scale of assertion, town disdaining and opposing town, city contemning city, and county county, province wrangling with province, nation fighting with nation, and empires locking themselves in death grapples, and all because of

<sup>1</sup> Some ants may, perhaps, be an exception to the rule indicated in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Some authors suggest that mass malignity or *civil war*, as it may be called, was a comparatively late manifestation in human society (Havelock Ellis, *The Philosophy of Conflict*; H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History*). But this is extremely doubtful. In any case the student should keep in mind the singularity of the manifestation and its incidence on society *as far back as we can actually go*.



differences in speech, habit, religion, or for purposes of material gain or political suzerainty, or for a variety of motives small and great which make history a terrible medley. The imbroglia indeed yields a sense of unutterable complexity in human affairs, making rationalisation impossible perhaps in the bulk of the contingencies. This singular warlike inclination must long have tended to keep the human ranks thinner than they would otherwise have been, and the woe involved must have been inestimably great. But, all the same, the destructive forces in human society, though singularly powerful, *must* have relatively been losing in strength throughout the ages. In no other way can we explain the fact that men have grown in numbers, knowledge has accumulated, and civil amenities have increased to the extent we see to-day. Once perhaps the habitable earth nourished only a few million savage hunters. But though wars have never ceased among the tribes of men, the forces of construction have continued to prevail, until to-day there are perhaps nearly two thousand million people living on the planet, the bulk of them enjoying a "civilised" life, even if the well-being is yet extremely low in too many places.<sup>1</sup> Thus, despite man's singular pugnacity, there has yet been a continuous growth in sympathy as against malignity, and it remains to be seen whether man cannot now take the last step in reasonableness which will eliminate warfare from human life altogether without at the same time robbing it of its essential manliness. In any event, despite the dreadful discounts apparent in the pages of history, Rationality has been gaining force in human affairs. That remains true even after the orgy of the recent world war which, with all its scientific fury, has

<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps not uninteresting to note here that the dry lands of the earth are much less in area than the oceans—three-elevenths of the total it is estimated. Further "if we deduct the space occupied by polar ice, the eternal snows, sandy deserts, sterile mountains, marshes, rivers and lakes, the habitable portion of the globe will scarcely exceed one-fifth of its entire surface" (Finch and Hawk's *Water in Nature*, p. 219). It is estimated that, if the Earth's present population could be crowded together so as to give not more than standing room to each, the Isle of Wight could contain the whole, gigantic as the total seems in figures. The animals perhaps exceed man in cubic mass, but these combined seem small in comparison with the Earth's vegetation upon which all animal activities are ultimately based.

destroyed nothing essential to its very base, since the constructive powers of the human race are perhaps greater than ever, or at least have only halted momentarily in the grand march of life.<sup>1</sup> But man being by instinct less sociable than many animals, Sociability any more than Language cannot be the differentia of which we are in search.

4. *Tools*.—It is here suggested that the most characteristic expression of man's superior brain is to be found in the tool-using capacity which is peculiar to the species. Some animals are great artists in their several ways, as spiders with their webs, ants with their tunnelled heaps, bees with their honeycombs, birds with their nests, beavers with their dams, and so on. But all these results are the work of specialised organs—claws, antennæ, teeth, bill, or what not. Man alone has attained to the power of using one part of matter *not organically attached to his body* in order to modify other matter indefinitely. In other words, "man is the tool-using animal," as Benjamin Franklin suggested—perhaps the best definition of the species that has yet been attempted. If it be true, as is often urged, that man "originated" in the tropics, then perhaps the first tool was a living bough torn from a tree or a dried stick lifted from the loam, since stones are rather scarce on the tropical floors. There may have been a "stick-age" in the life of humanity; many races still are practically confined to wood for the purposes of their daily life. In any event stones became serviceable not only for knocking animals as well as fellow beings on the head, but also as tools, and being thus constructive as well as destructive.<sup>2</sup> For long the stones were very rudely shaped for their purposes, but in the end certain races

<sup>1</sup> The loss of life in the war, though great, seems only to have been as a drop in the bucket, and, despite famines and economical and political difficulties, the waste is being rapidly repaired. Thus, even the greatest war in world history has shown how ineffective the forces of destruction are to achieve any permanent victory. It may be the case that another war would prove much more destructive through an intensified use of poison gases, &c. It is conceivable, for instance, that a resurgent Germany through chemical monopolies might almost depopulate France in another struggle, but if the Allies are suffering now from Germany's very prostration, much more would Germany suffer in the case figured by the creation of so many "blasted heaths" beyond her borders.

<sup>2</sup> A weapon may be considered as a tool used for destruction instead of construction.

acquired perfect artistry in the shaping of their tools and weapons.<sup>1</sup> At length, perhaps some ten thousand years ago or more, man discovered the *malleability of the metals*.<sup>2</sup> Bronze, which is an alloy of copper and tin, seems first to have been used, perhaps because of the less refractory character of the metals employed. Then came iron, and its refinement known as steel, upon which modern civilisation, with its railways, mammoth ships, and manufacturing, may be said to be based. For, by means of steel, gas, steam, and electricity could be "tamed" and made to work for man in thousandfold form. But, alas, steel could also "tame" the forces of nature on the destructive side, until, at the end of the recent war, death was being dealt from giant tubes half a hundred miles away from the firing point. All the same, as already urged, "Civilisation" (however one may choose to define it) has, as its base, the power of man to use tools upon any plane higher than the merely rudimentary. Thus, the greater spirituality which is generally assumed to be embodied in "Civilisation" has one of its deepest roots in the tool-using power peculiar to humanity. History is thus largely a record of man's growing power over his "inorganic" environment and over his own wayward dealings with his fellow creatures, however unconsciously the ends were pursued.

5. *Human Dispersion*.—If it be true as speculated that man "originated" in the moist tropics which remain the home of his supposed congeners the anthropoid apes, then it *may* be the case that he was once a "fruitarian," as are these primates still. Should the tool-using power have come to him in arboreal times, it is easily conceivable that it would tempt him into the opener plains, with their greater elbow-room. Missiles there would be of greater avail against the animals stalking human life. With his new weapons man might not only cease to fear the fiercest

<sup>1</sup> Authorities divide up man's life into "Palæolithic" and "Neolithic" ages, or old- and new-stone ages respectively. The latter is supposed to have covered a comparatively brief period, and the art never became universal—the Tasmanians, for instance, still being in the Palæolithic age when they were "discovered" to their very swift undoing.

<sup>2</sup> This implies the use of Fire—a capital invention—which, however, comes under the definition of "Tools" used in the text, as being the manipulation of matter (or energy) by other matter not organically connected with the body.

beasts of prey, but actually come to feed upon them as the result of licking the warm blood that stained his hands after the wondrous victories with his lethal weapons. In any event, man became not only carnivorous, but also omnivorous, and, in virtue of his tool-using power, went forth conquering and to conquer until he had accomplished the peopling of the earth, "that greatest of unsung epics" as it has been called. When history opens, man was everywhere, inhabiting all the continents and the greater islands of the sea. But we know neither the actual starting point nor the routes of dispersion. It is possible that, when the grand migrations began, the stock was already very varied as regards shape of the skull, slant of the eyelids, colour of the skin, and other minor marks of "race." The shift into other climates and environments would tend to modify the settling stocks still further, resulting in the medley we observe to-day. But, if we take colour as the most ostensible if not final test of "race," we can see at once that there has been great stability in what we may call the "world-ridges" of men. That is to say, the black races centre, as they have always done, in Africa and some East Indian areas, the brown in India, the yellow in further Asia, the white in nearer Asia and in Europe, and the so-called "red" in America. Though there has been wavering of the ethnic boundary lines, the ridges have remained practically unmodified, despite all the wars and rumours of wars of which history is a record. Only in America has there been any considerable process of displacement and replacement, for reasons which will be apparent in their place.<sup>1</sup> Destructive as war may have been in local detail, we see that it has no more affected the *continental distribution* of men than it has effectively inhibited the general increase of the species.

6. *Cultural Stagnation.*—In the foregoing sections we have attained to the conception of a tool-using animal radiating out from a common centre, peopling the earth throughout its remotest bounds, and becoming the "universal species" in virtue mainly, if not exclusively, of the tool-using power peculiar to the species. But it happened

<sup>1</sup> See hereafter, p. 325.

that in many areas men never progressed beyond the most rudimentary tool-using stage. They remained at the lowest possible "savage" level, while other men, hypothetically descended from a common ancestor with the laggards,<sup>1</sup> went forward to the achievement of the highest civilisations in existence to-day. Why this stagnation on the one hand and progress on the other? Two answers are possible: (1) That certain stocks are inherently incapable of progress beyond the point attained to. (2) That the "environment" in the most comprehensive sense of the term is the "inhibiting" factor. If that cannot be altered, then it is just as if the stock were inherently defective, since utter stagnation is the result in both cases. As regards the first point it is to be noted that, if man had an animal origin, but rose to a human plane however low, then absolute immobility cannot be predicated of any human stock. It might therefore be wise to hold theoretically that all stocks, however "low," are capable of indefinite progress if only the conditions could become favourable. We shall however require to be content with theory in such a connection. For in the world as it is actually constituted, it may be impossible to institute permanently favourable conditions for experiments with a view to progress as regards any backward stock. The native Tasmanians, Australian black fellows, and some Polynesian peoples have either disappeared entirely, or are wilting so hopelessly as to make their cases desperate from the progressive point of view. The existence of Civilisation around them is perhaps the very condition which militates against their advance, since the culture contacts are too disparate, and the doom of the aborigines is perhaps fixed, even should existing animosity transmute into general fostering kindness. That, indeed, might but

<sup>1</sup> Despite the very marked differences among human stocks—between the brain of a naked Fuegian who cannot count beyond five, and the brain of an Einstein who undertakes to revise the conclusions of a Newton by mathematical formulæ that only a dozen men living can comprehend (so Einstein himself has indicated)—the human races are held to form only one *species*. The most disparate groups seem to be fertile *inter se*, which is held to be the hall-mark of "species" in the scientific sense of the word. But we remain in doubt on many problems, e.g. what was the colour of the first human beings and how did variation come about, assuming only one complexion to begin with? Of course the variations may have been inherited from the pre-human stocks.

expedite the consumptive progress. The Maoris, and the Red Indians in some quarters, have shown notable tendencies towards culture, and are said to be rather on the upgrade as regards numbers. But, in the very measure in which they become attuned to the circumambient culture will they tend to be absorbed in the larger surrounding stocks, and may thus ultimately disappear entirely as distinct types. The culture contacts in that case will have proved as overwhelming *despite* responsiveness as in the other cases where accommodation was wholly lacking.<sup>1</sup>

7. *Climate and Culture.*—(a) There is a sense, however, in which “environment” is a real clue to the problem of unprogressiveness in hand. There are three chief types of climate on our planet—the torrid, the temperate, and the frigid.<sup>2</sup> Some parts of the torrid zone are desert, but the characteristic of the climate is great heat and great moisture combined. This combination favours plant life in as great degree as it tends to depress human activity. For lassitude is the bane of man in the tropics, sapping will power in an extraordinary degree. Even the most hustling Americans entering the tropical countries, determined not to be overcome like their predecessors, do not for long resist the climatic influences, and become loafers like the rest.<sup>3</sup> It would require extra activity to contend with the rankness of plant life in the tropics, but the climate acts as a drag instead of a spur; hence the regions of the Congo, the Amazon, New Guinea, Borneo, &c., remain forest wildernesses, with no impression upon them yet, despite all the forces of steam and electricity now fully at command. The very fact that food may exist in these regions in such natural abundance as to require

<sup>1</sup> Scientists tell us that crossings between stocks is a main source of progress, both physically and mentally, provided however the types be not too extreme. In the latter case the results may be anything but good, the mongrel inheriting apparently all the vices of the parents and the virtues of neither. There is a negro proverb to the effect that “God made the black man, God made the white man, but the devil himself made the mulatto.”

<sup>2</sup> Salisbury (*Physiography*) says: “Better names for these zones are the tropical, the intermediate, and the polar.” It may be well, however, to retain the older classifications here.

<sup>3</sup> Ellsworth Huntington, *Civilisation and Climate*.

no more labour than the mere collecting tends to debase man rather than to elevate him.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, should want exist or blight occur, there is no energy to overcome the difficulties of the situation, and man is kept depressed equally by plenty and poverty. For all the reasons indicated it is sufficiently obvious why tropical man has never risen beyond being a tool-using animal at the lowest stages of the art.

(b) A similar moral applies in even intenser fashion to the other climatic extreme—the frigid. Though there seems to be more land in Antarctica than was once thought, it remains glaciated in extreme degree. Never, perhaps, until modern times did the foot of man touch the soil of the further Antarctic wastes which remain “the paradise of penguins.” Even in extreme South America the high monotonous winds make life a very depressing business, and the Fuegians, just because of inclemency, are kept at as low a level as tropical tribes in their constant hot bath. In the Arctic regions there is more land than in the extreme south, and the conditions on the whole are more favourable to human activity. But the conditions remain extremely severe, though the Esquimaux especially have shown how much artistic talent may modify natural disadvantages. But progress was impossible, despite great mechanical ingenuity. “Climate,” therefore, is the sufficient answer to the unprogressiveness of man in the torrid and frigid zones.

(c) This leaves us only to deal with the temperate regions of the world, which have in fact proved the theatres for all the progress that man has manifested. Though the physiological reason may escape us, the temperate regions on the whole stimulate human activity instead of depressing it. But the curious thing about these regions is the fact that it was not the most naturally favourable areas which acted as seed plots of progress and originated the thing we call civilisation. Though the southern hemisphere has less land than the northern, many areas in South Africa and South America had an excellent climate and naturally fertile soils, yet induced no civilisation *in situ*. So with the great prairies of North America, and the still greater plains of temperate Eurasia, which

<sup>1</sup> On this point see the classical works of Bates, Darwin, and Wallace.

in the black-earth region of Russia and the yellow lands of China are so naturally fertile *that they never require manuring*, and to-day can be made to bear a hundredfold. In such areas, if anywhere, the tool-using animal should surely have settled solidly from the earliest times, and have evolved cultures of the highest type. But, saving the case of the yellow lands of China,<sup>1</sup> the areas in question remained practically uncultivated and savage or barbarian almost until yesterday. In fact Civilisation began in relatively unfavourable regions both in the new world and the old—in semi-desert Mexico, on the barren hill-sides of Peru, and in the reed-haunted desert river valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates—areas which required immense preliminary labour before any progress worthy of the name could be secured. This is a great paradox in history, perhaps the greatest we can imagine. What is the explanation? To answer the question we must now call psychological considerations to our aid. Let the reader not be surprised or impatient if the analysis about to be attempted may seem slow in development, since the intention is to get to the root of a matter that has too long lacked explanation on the lines now to be attempted.

8. *Nomadism in History.*—(a) We are constantly in the habit of stating that the life of animals is regulated by that “Instinct” which an immemorial heredity has implanted in their beings. But the life of a man is also largely controlled by “Instinct.” Indeed, without such an hereditary influence at work, the life of all species would become utterly unstable. On the other hand, if the “Instinct” be so pronounced as to make responsiveness impossible to any change in the environment, then complete disaster may overtake the species doomed by the very perfection of its adaptation to long-standing conditions. Where this so-called “Instinct” ends and “Reason” begins it is impossible to say, nor is it possible even to give a satisfactory definition of these several terms which, however, we must continue to employ if useful discussion is to be carried on at all. Instances of “reason” on the part

<sup>1</sup> Even as regards these the civilisation is held to be only “secondary” and not “primary,” like Egyptian and Babylonian.



of lower animals are not wanting.<sup>1</sup> But the faculty is weak or transient in the orders beneath man, whose superior brain has endowed him with the faculty in superlative degree. But, though there are no human beings (except imbeciles and lunatics) who are quite devoid of "reason," it is essential that the student of history should constantly keep in mind the small part that rationality plays in the life of the masses. Carlyle spoke of such masses as being "mostly fools." This was a contemptuous, ungenerous, and biased way of stating what, in its proper setting, is a real scientific fact. There are few men who have not a faculty in some special direction, however strictly limited the talent may be. But it is necessary in the scrutiny of human affairs to recognise how little versatility there really is among men, and to note that conspicuous talent (rising occasionally to the indefinable thing we call "genius"<sup>2</sup>) is confined to a minority.<sup>3</sup> In other words men are in greater part the creatures of fixed Instinct, Habit, or Custom, call it what you will. We come into a world controlled by the habits of our parents, families, kindred, and neighbours, and these pre-existing influences playing on our lives in their most plastic, impressionable stages mould our intellectual and social outlooks and destinies, generally beyond individual remede. For there may be an actual *malaise* in striving

<sup>1</sup> The works of Fabre are rich in instances of the kind indicated.

<sup>2</sup> Most of the great geniuses are known only by their works. The creatures who first invented tools, however rudimentary, who earliest made use of fire, invented the wheel, fused the metals, &c., &c., were all geniuses of the first water, but probably earned little credit and no profit as happens yet in these days of enlightenment, when it is difficult to say who was actually "first" as regards a new invention. Progress in knowledge as well as mechanical advance has always been by slow and gradual increments, as the inquiry into war-like inventiveness is showing at the present moment, and the greatest difficulty is being found in discovering "originality" and awarding prizes therefor. It is still being complained that it is not the inventor who reaps the profit so much as the *entrepreneur*, whose lesser talent does not prevent him exploiting completely the more high-grade intelligence.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Lester Ward (*Applied Sociology*) contends that the *latent* talent in humanity is very great, and that it is evil social conditions which hold it under, the suppressed talent being quite ineffectual somehow to break through its medium as a chicken bursts its shell. It is only a very delicate divining rod that could assure us of all this. Even if talent is much more diffused than allowed for in the text, it makes no difference to the point now being made as to the influence in *past* history of the forces of Instinct, Custom, or Habit.

to break loose from Habit even if the conditions can be pronounced evil from any detached point of view. To put the thing as concretely as possible, take the case of slavery in the United States, which was only abolished after a dreadful civil war waged nominally over the question of "State Rights." Even Liberationists had to admit that many slaves were quite contented with their lot, or did nothing to free themselves, and were loyal rather than recalcitrant, while they did not know how to make use of the liberty when it was acquired, even as happened in North Africa among the more high-grade Berbers when emancipation took place there also. Plutarch tells us that when Marius in his dreadful conflict with Sulla called the slaves to his colours under a promise of freedom, he only got two recruits! Such is the power of Instinct, Habit, and Custom in human communities. The fact could be illustrated from a hundred different points of view were there any need to do so. Enough, however, has perhaps been said to indicate what a powerful force in society is Custom which is rooted in "Instinct" rather than in "Reason." Without Reason any departure from routine is wellnigh impossible. In short, men in mass are naturally conservative, in the scientific and not in the political sense of the term however. Thus political and social reform has perhaps oftener been imposed upon "the people" than demanded by them *en masse*.<sup>1</sup> Only a minority of the women in Great

<sup>1</sup> Many highly intelligent men have been Conservative because of their aversion to "the mob." David Hume seems to have been a case in point. But any idea that "the people" would revolutionise institutions from top to bottom if they had the power has been founded largely on illusion it is now suggested. Tumultuous the "mob" may be, but in so far as it was not merely orgiastic, it was oftener for religious or dynastic interests in the conservative line than for its own economic betterment. In other words "Jacqueries" have been the exception rather than the rule, and it falls to be noted that the insurgent Jacques were overcome, not by the handful of nobles, but by the non-insurgent masses commanded by the aristocrats. It often happens, too, that revolutions intended for the benefit of the people have had aristocrats or bourgeoisie as their efficient engineers; the present Russian upheaval repeating what had earlier happened in France and elsewhere. Of course the more a people gets educated up to the level of its masters, the more really reformatory it may become, and if it does not eschew violence in the sequel it will be because that inheres in the nature of politics, rather than in a "democratic" manifestation purely and simply. Renascent Italy and revolutionary Germany show to what lengths violence may go in the assertion of other than "popular" rights.

Britain engineered the partial "emancipation" lately attained to, while the Frenchwoman (perhaps more of a "manager" even than her British sister) is still content with such "Subjection" as is still her lot. Let us apply this rather hard won generalisation to the problem indicated a few pages back, if still by methods of a seemingly outflanking nature.

(b) It is common ground among scientists that man once subsisted wholly upon the produce of the chase, animals, perhaps, coming in to supplement an earlier frugivorous diet. But this hypothetical hunting stage, even if it were once universal, was consistent only with a very sparse human population. Calculations made by Lubbock, Scott-Elliot, and others have indicated that, so exigent of great space is the hunter's life, the total population of the globe in purely Nimrodic times might amount to little more than eight millions or so—that is to say, to only about the population of modern London. The domestication of animals, whenever and wherever it took place,<sup>1</sup> by the greater alimentionation attained to, may have added some fourfold to the earth's population—a total, say, of forty millions or thereabouts—a figure nearly equal to Great Britain's population to-day, but then embracing people of all colours, tribes, and tongues. If ingenuity had stopped short with pastoralism, then the earth would have remained rather forlorn with no great density of population possible, and with none of the arts of life that depend upon "multitudinousness."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps it might have been quite a tolerable place for all that, since the Esquimaux, Samoyedes, Inuit, Mongols,

<sup>1</sup> We are quite ignorant on this point, and also as to whether or not pastoralism preceded agriculture in human economy. It certainly could not have done so in America which had no domesticable animals, although the bison *might* have been "tamed" to human purposes (Semple, *Influences of Geographic Environment*). Pastoralism was an old-world development extended to America only after the "discovery."

<sup>2</sup> Though there may be much poetical folk-lore among primitive peoples art in more advanced forms seems to require considerable density of population for its ampler manifestations, in painting, sculpture, music, architecture, poetry, drama, and literature generally. Of course, there might be considerable achievement in forlorn enough conditions when "great verse was left unto a little clan" as Keats says, *e.g.*, ancient Greece and mediæval Iceland. But very high stimuli may be evoked only exceptionally as in the temples of the vanished Maya peoples, and the statues of lonely Easter Island.

Kirghiz and others nōt only enjoy life but some nomads utterly loathe and condemn settled existence, as did the Boers, transplanted from agricultural Holland to what Mr. Chamberlain called "the illimitable veldt."<sup>1</sup> But the genius of man continued to seek out many inventions, and the art of agriculture was one of the greatest of these. In what part of the world deliberate sowing, weeding, pruning, grafting, hoeing and ploughing emerged we do not know. The inventions probably cropped out spontaneously in many parts both of the old world and the new, for, though pastoralism was unknown in America in pre-Columbian times, a quite intensive agriculture flourished there, as already indicated. But, as formerly remarked, it was the refractory soils of the temperate zone that were fully exploited before the relatively more fertile, some of which remained prairies until modern times. And now we are within sight of the *direct* application of the psychological element we have been pursuing in preceding sections—circuitously, no doubt, but perhaps with valuable incidental considerations being picked up on the way.

(c) Considering the force of Instinct, Habit, and Custom already sufficiently discussed, it is conceivable that the creatures who first made deliberate use of tools were frowned upon if not actually persecuted by the Tories of the time, who might contend that teeth and claws, having been sufficient in the struggle for existence up to that point, should continue to be relied upon instead of the new-fangled inventions which were an insult to custom and might even upset the State to its very foundations.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As all tribes of humanity have so long led a wandering life, it is possible that even settled sections of men to-day may still be afflicted with a "racial atavism," as it may be put. Hence "the call of the wild" takes individuals far away from London firesides, even as it urged the Boers to trek further and further into the wilds away from the hated sight of smoke curling from a neighbouring farm. Constantine Porphyrogenitus wrote concerning the ancient Serbs and Bulgars: "They cannot suffer one cabin close to another." The Russian peasants who many years ago were sent into Siberia to induce the Kirghiz to settle down soon became nomads instead of farmers as intended. The fox-hunting and deer-stalking proclivities of the British aristocracy may be but attenuated manifestations of the racial atavism indicated.

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult in such a connection to refrain from writing without an appearance of irony. But in point of fact sociological literature is full of what seem to us absurd restrictions and struggles against reform of all kinds in society that might be anything but primitive. The inventor

But these prehistoric reformers would have an argument not always open to inventors since. For the merest minority, in virtue of their weapons, could rout howling multitudes of primitive Protestants unable to come to close quarters with the "Radicals" of the prime. Thus the weapon wielders would triumph easily; but many of them might become conservative in their turn when it was a case of improving upon the weapons to which they had become accustomed. In sober scientific truth military history is full of "crass conservatism" vetoing real improvements in the "art of war," with disastrous results often to the side wedding itself to the ancient ways.<sup>1</sup>

Whether or not the primitive human hunters resisted the advance into pastoralism we cannot say. Probably they did. But the shepherds would prove more than a match for the recalcitrants because the ampler economic resources of the pastoralists would give them greater mass-force, while their initiative and physique remained at least equal to that of the hunters. For the shepherd lived as much an open-air life as the hunter, and his rude genius and courage were thus conserved while his numbers were greatly increased. It was quite different when the agriculturist entered upon the scene.

(d) Some nomadic tribes are given to tillage after the fashion of the ancient Iroquois.<sup>2</sup> But in the nature of the case the cultivation is of a very hand-to-mouth

of new dances in Egypt was put to death. Professor Tylor refers to the well-known case of the Dyaks, who were heavily punished for cutting trees in V-shaped fashion instead of by the much less efficient method sanctified by custom. Keane (*The World's Peoples*) refers to conservative cannibals in Africa who argued that the abolition of the custom of killing and eating enemies would ruin the state. See also New, *Life Wanderings in Africa*, for absurd inhibitions among the Waniki. Instances might be multiplied *ad nauseam*.

<sup>1</sup> In the recent world-war there was a terrible struggle between the advocates of shrapnel and those of high explosives, while the controversy regarding "capital ships" still continues in the British Navy. Similar controversies took place in all states, not only regarding advance in material but also in tactics and strategy. It was Napoleon's disregard of custom which enabled him to win many of his triumphs, as had happened earlier with Epaminondas, who defeated the Spartans. Their conservatism prevented them from learning the terrible lesson of Leuctra.

<sup>2</sup> It was maize which the Indians principally cultivated, but no grain is more easily sown, ripens so quickly and surely, and is reaped with such little labour. It thus had no real fixing quality whatever (Semple, work cited).

character with no fixing power *in situ*. And such fixity seems necessary to any culture worthy of the name, albeit tillage, being a very laborious business in the best of circumstances, may give wealth and leisure but to the few whose amenities may be founded on the ceaseless toil of the many not sufficiently rewarded for their pains. But the point to be noted meantime is that real tillage implies not only fixity upon the soil but also a softening of the mental asperities that the life of the hunter and the shepherd is so well calculated to sustain. If one tiller wants to cultivate his patch in peace he must respect his neighbour's patch and concur in that other's harvest home. Turbulence and insecurity in the croplands so very exacting in their demands would sooner or later cause the country to relapse into desert or prairie, as has actually happened a thousand times in history. Therefore agriculture, wherever it asserted itself, in the very nature of the case stood substantially for peace, with all that that implied. Unhappily the tiller, becoming amicable towards his neighbour, tended at the same time to become "soft" *vis-à-vis* the nomad alarmed at the threat to his supremacy but determined not be displaced by the man with the hoe, who, in the measure of his devotion to the soil, became less capable of wielding lances, swords, or bows-and-arrows, which were the appanage of the rovers in the ceaseless quarrels of the tribes. If there be no record of any antagonism between the hunters and shepherds of the prime there is no lack of evidence as to the mortal duel that has gone on between the shepherd and the tiller since time immemorial. Agriculture, as a variation on nomadism, would be opposed on that account alone as a departure from the ancient ways, with no regard for the richer rewards bound up with the new departure. The manly life was the roving, random, quarrelsome one, with all the hard work of the camp turned over to the women or the slaves, if such there were in the tribe—former enemies perhaps spared only for the bondman's life. The disposition then would be not only to despise the tiller wherever he sought to establish himself, but also to despoil him on every occasion.<sup>1</sup> Thus the

<sup>1</sup> There is no need to argue *in vacuo* on this point. In Asia to-day, where shepherd and tiller stand confronted as in the past, the antagonism

“will to agriculture” wherever it appeared among the nomadic races (as appear it must have done as a “reasonable” variation through the influences formerly indicated) would be stamped out at every opportunity. “Kill first, and despoil if you cannot” seems to have been the motto of nomadism from the beginning. So, in a world that once contained nothing but hunters and shepherds, tillage was permanently impossible upon the open if fertile plains of the temperate zones, because of a nomadism that could neither be bridled nor destroyed. For the advantage was all on the nomadic side. The relative “softness” of the tiller, induced as indicated, left him no match, militarily, for the shepherd. And, even if a combination of agriculturists might ward off a barbarous raid, it was difficult for the tiller with his economic preoccupations and less virile mind permanently to resist incursions, while mercenaries might only sell the passes to the enemy. It was also difficult or hopeless to attempt to root out the raiders in their distant lairs, since that might only be to incur certain disaster in the wastes. We can thus see why civilisation, which has its roots in agriculture, could not commence in the fertile areas of Europe, Asia, and America simply because of their openness to nomadic attack. Culture thus was forced to seek out desert and semi-desert regions, because they yielded a shelter which no other earthly corners could supply. Hence the rise of civilisation in Egypt and Mesopotamia in the old world and Mexico and Peru in the new. Even when tillage *had* asserted itself outside these ancient domains (perhaps under the tuition of the “primary cultures” in addition to native assertiveness) nomadism remained the constant enemy. Hence the dreadful visitations of Scythians, Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Kipchaks, Mongols, Tatars, and Turks—names at which the world still grows pale. And such incursions might have continued indefinitely, like exists still. The shepherd loathes and contemns the tiller, who has not ceased to fear his antagonist even if there can be no spoliation as of old. The worst thing that can befall a man in the eyes of these shepherds is to be forced to till the soil, as sometimes happens when untimely frosts or murrains rob a chief of all his live-stock. Then only does he turn to the soil for subsistence, but loses all caste not only in the eyes of his quondam associates, but even in his own, as he sinks deeper into the slime of settled existence. See Peisker, *Cambridge Mediaeval History*, vol. ii.

ice-ages in geology, had not, curiously enough, gunpowder come to rid civilisation of an immemorial curse even if the invention were to set up special difficulties of its own. How exactly this surprising result came about will best be indicated in its proper chronological order.

9. *Female Subjection*.—The generalisations reached in the preceding sections are probably the widest we can seek to establish regarding human origins in relation to actual history. There are, however, lesser considerations which it may be well to outline if also in very summary fashion before dealing with explicit records whose rationalisation is the main object of the present study. We do not know to what extent the conditions of even the most savage people to-day may reflect those of the human dawn. It has often been speculated that humanity passed through a stage of “promiscuity” as it is called. But that idea has gone out of fashion. Though the “family” has many different forms (some of them quite “immoral” to European eyes), it falls to be noted that the relations of men, women, and children to each other cannot be declared to have been really “anarchical” at any time in human history, and that conventions, however arbitrary and absurd some of them may appear to us to-day, apparently operated strictly from the beginning. It is not the object here to explore this extremely difficult subject in which the scholarship of McLennan and Lewis Morgan left such profound marks, and in the toils of which the genius of Westermarck is still engaged. The matter has little or no bearing upon the problems of universal history. But it is of importance to take note of the position of women in society as distinct from the “family.” The late Professor Lester Ward, founding upon exceedingly interesting facts in natural history pointing to the superiority of females in many species, argued for a primal superiority of the female in the human species—for a state of “gynæcocracy,” as it is technically called.<sup>1</sup> Such a state of society *may* actually have existed once, but the fact is now beyond all proof, and the causes of its collapse, so daringly outlined by Ward, must for ever remain in the region of speculation. What we have to face is the fact that woman to-day is generally subject

<sup>1</sup> See, in particular, his *Pure Sociology*.



to man among the hunting and barbarous tribes which are our only index as to primitive conditions, and that she has never been actually "free" in any civilisation down to our own time. There seems to be a tendency to "specialisation of function" in the organic world. This tendency seems to have earliest asserted itself in relation to the sexes, woman having been made to do all the "dirty work" of life so far back as we can go in history. That was held to be her "sphere." And here the power of Custom comes in once more as an illuminating idea. However unsatisfactory it may be from the suffragette point of view, women themselves have been often the most active advocates of the "subjection" in question, even if a minority were powerful in engineering recent emancipations. Such is the power of Custom in another relation than that already commented on! Be that as it may, it is well to note that, however female subjection originated in society, it is an immemorial fact. It is indeed the earliest form of division of labour. In the ages that are gone woman was the constant drudge, slaving in the field perhaps as well as by the fire, while the man looked on at his lordly leisure when not actually engrossed in the ardour of the chase or sweating in the lust of battle. While, in some primitive tribes, the women might retain a certain say in the "council-fires" of the nation, political power was nearly always monopolised by the men, even if women sometimes ruled the roast as queens, or were content with that back-stairs influence which has so often determined the destinies of communities.<sup>1</sup> Whatever the future may hold, historical appraisements in the past are to be made in terms of the greater or less subjection of man's better half.

10. *Slavery*.—But when the pages of history really open, men themselves are seen to be in perhaps even deeper subjection to small sections of their fellow-men. In other words Slavery was in full play thousands of years before the time of Christ. Chattel slavery is perhaps not so much a pre-historic as a pre-human fact. Certain ants, at any rate, seem to hold other communities in a bondage that is extremely willing, unless appearances

<sup>1</sup> Letourneau somewhere indicates that "there are henpecked husbands in deserts and drawing-rooms alike."

are quite deceitful. In purely hunting communities slavery is practically unknown. The woman, being already the drudge or slave in such communities, there could be little or nothing for a male bondman to do. He could hardly be set to hunt like a hooded falcon, for it is more than likely that he would utilise the loosening of his bonds to secure his freedom rather than bring down any prey. In short, since an eye could not possibly be kept upon male subjects in such utter vagabondage, slavery was "uneconomic," saving as regards wives whom the feeling of sex and the influences of Custom thirled to their lords and masters as by hooks of steel. Under pastoralism, however, male subjection became a real enough fact.<sup>1</sup> It is quite possible, as sometimes suggested, that slavery may originally have stood for a certain humanitarian advance in society. All captive enemies were probably at one time preserved only for purposes of torture or sacrifice or both combined. If so, there may have been real advance later, in allowing the captive to grind at the mill instead of mounting the altar. In any event, pastoralism from the first is seen to consist with a considerable amount of slavery in the manner typified by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the ancient sheiks of Israel. When agriculture with its incomparably more exacting toil established itself in any quarter, the temptation would be exceedingly great to throw the whole burden upon servile shoulders. It is probable indeed that Egypt and Mesopotamia, as well as Mexico and Peru, were redeemed and won to tillage by a free farming class possessing the "will to agriculture," and impelled by comparatively peaceful motives that affect individuals in every community however rude. Wherever it happened, that might be called the golden age of agriculture, not so much because of the bountifulness of harvests, as the

<sup>1</sup> While hunting might be difficult to do by deputy, the tending of flocks and herds (too arduous for the already preoccupied wives) could be more easily attended to by mere menials. Hence slavery "paid" under pastoralism compared with the hunting stage of existence, provided the keeping of an eye upon the slave did not cost more than doing the work oneself. Even where the conditions might not be unfavourable to dashes for freedom, hereditary slaves, whose blood was attuned to servility, might be held in thrall more by the force of Custom than by actual chains or manacles. Habit is thus not only second nature as regards the individual, but a constant clue in history.

mentality of the small farmers whose sturdiness and general "bienness,"<sup>1</sup> as the Scotch call it, were the strongest pillars of all states in pre-industrial times. But, for reasons which may afterwards be apparent, there has been a tendency at all times for wealth to concentrate in a very few hands, and, in the long run, a peasant nation might develop the disease of large estates (the *latifundia* of the Romans) and a few lairds lord it over a mass of slaves or fellahin, the latter nominally free perhaps but utterly impoverished. Thus ancient Egypt, once perhaps the pioneer peasant state of humanity, was, at the historic dawn, bondage-bound in so far as it was not rack-rented. But there seems to be a disposition in all nations to outgrow chattel slavery, however induced originally, though it may have been through the portals of serfdom and in reliance upon the unfettered labour of a teeming population being actually "cheaper" than that of the thralls. In any event, Egypt early transcended the worst symptoms of slavery, and shows up well in the picture when ranked alongside republican Greece and Imperial Rome, whose callousness, according to Westermarck, was yet outdone by the modern United States, where, according to the authority quoted, the lot of the slave was the worst on record.<sup>2</sup> However that may be, Slavery was a fact at the dawn of history, affecting the life of all the greater historical peoples, and rigidly moulding their destinies. It transmuted into serfdom, and serfdom lapsed from life for reasons which are not easily divined, but which cannot be wholly unconnected with advances in real sympathy, even if under promptings of a half-conscious economic kind. In all civilised countries to-day men are free and equal in the eye of the law, though reputable economists are not awanting who declare that "machine- and wage-slavery" has simply taken the place of the ancient vices, and that the lot of the prole-

<sup>1</sup> The word "bien" can hardly be translated by a single term; "modest affluence" perhaps comes nearest the meaning in English.

<sup>2</sup> *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*. Though the truth of the statement may be acquiesced in, Americans in the mass are not thereby guilty of being the worst task-masters on record. Slavery in America developed in the age of "soulless mechanics and big businesses," and planters, however humanitarian as individuals, could not control a system exploited by a few, often against the grain of the many.

tariat is little better than that of the serf in the past. Even if that were true, the increment admitted is still to be registered as a notable gain, considering how slow all social evolution seems to be in the very nature of the case. In any event, in the historical perspectives of the past serfdom and slavery take their place as master-features in the scene, dwarfed only by the larger and older fact of subjected women living under inner thrall to the male slaves and serfs held bound by the overlords.

11. *Property*.—The idea of private property has already been involved in the conception of slavery and even in the subjection of woman,<sup>1</sup> but it may be well to say a few words as regards the evolution of the general conception. Many animals have the sense of exclusive possession not merely of tangible things, but also of lairs and ample enough tracts of territory. Thus the scavenger dogs of Eastern cities manifest a boundary sense of no mean order—"any poacher upon the recognised domains being summarily dealt with without benefit of clergy." Common sense tells that our limbs and our bodies are our own in an exclusive way "to use and abuse," as an old locution has it. The desire for food and drink, the most uncontrollable of human passions, prompts to appropriation at every turn. Such are the well-springs of property in its legal sense. In the hunting stage of existence, however, private property might be recognised only as regards implements, weapons, body clothes, and wives, whose status might be that of the merest chattel. Even the produce of the chase might continue to be shared in common. Rough boundaries might indeed mark off the territory of one tribe from another,<sup>2</sup> but within the community there might be practically no recognition of the right of property in *Land*. Whether or not pastoralism preceded tillage in the old world, it is seen to consist with the extension of the idea of private property

<sup>1</sup> Savages often punish adultery, not so much because there has been an offence against sexual morality, as because the law of *property* in the woman has been outraged (Letourneau).

<sup>2</sup> Often the division was created by "marches," which might be purposely devastated or left uncultivated to hold enemies at a distance. The Red Indians surrounded themselves by such deliberate wastes, as did Wellington in Portugal to hold at bay the Napoleonic push towards the sea. On this interesting point see Semple, work cited, p. 216.

compared with the hunting stage. The land might continue to be held tribally,<sup>1</sup> but the flocks of camels, sheep, goats, horses, and cattle were assigned in absolute fee to individuals whose wealth tended to enhance their power and status in the community. From that point onwards "inequality" might become more and more pronounced. The land indeed might become, theoretically at least, the property of the monarch, with the clergy and the nobility sharing however in a too-real monopoly, and the people, who did all the work, having the slightest right of all in the produce created by their labour.<sup>2</sup> The spectacle of what is considered to be gross economic inequality in a state like revolutionary France<sup>3</sup> or Czaristic Russia has called up no small philosophic wonder at times, and it is an amazement to some writers that "the people" did not rise in revolt against the terrible exploitation to which they were constantly subject. Let us attempt now to find out why "the people" have seldom or never been capable of such assertiveness. When men consider the welfare of their "country" is at stake there is nothing easier than to secure a *levée en masse*. The idea of hearth, home, altar, and fatherland (embodying everything most dear to the individual however impoverished he may be) can then be fought for with the tigerish ferocity of a fight

<sup>1</sup> The reader is very gravely cautioned against believing that there ever was a state of absolute "communism" as regards the land under completely settled conditions. The spirit of individual appropriation seems to have worked there also from the earliest possible moment, leading to peasant proprietorship followed by landlordism and "latifundia," despite perhaps some roughly defined rights to "commons," &c. It must always be remembered that behind the "runrig" system and the "mir" still in operation in some quarters, there was always a real live landlord vitiating the whole conception of "communism" sought to be foisted on the facts. It seems to the writer that the last word has been said on this interesting subject by Fustel de Coulanges in his essay, translated into English under the title, *The Origin of Property in Land*.

<sup>2</sup> It may be urged in this connection that "capital" was simply earning its reward through the operation of the "laws" of political economy. There is no intention here of challenging this dogma, or of disputing the substantial validity of the doctrine of "Capital" and "Labour" embodied in the text-books. The object now is to call attention rather to the psychology which could produce a system "in which the rich tended to become richer and the poor poorer." That may not be happening now as the late Henry George contended, but it certainly occurred at many stages of history—there assuredly being a "law" that wealth tends to concentrate in few hands.

<sup>3</sup> France before the revolution embodied less inequality than most European countries of the time. See hereafter, p. 362.

for life itself. It is true that the conception of "country" may be a very restricted one. It may be hardly larger than a parish and cover only a single clan, or embrace little beyond the walls of the "city state" of old, though it may come to include, however vaguely and confusedly, an empire as large as that of ancient Rome or of modern Britain. Even if in such cases "the parties may be fighting for their own skins," as it has been put, the menace *from without* gives an altruistic cast to the common effort as in no other case. But, when the thing that outsiders may conceptually denounce as evil inheres in the state of society into which the individual is born, the feeling of Custom may make him almost oblivious of the vice, or, in so far as it may be recognised, tranquilly hope against hope for a remedy in a distance viewed as beneficent, as a sort of Providence only temporarily bound in chains.<sup>1</sup> Even when the mass might heave in insurrection, defeat was generally certain in the very nature of the case. The menaced few with their sharply defined interests dropped all party bickerings as by magic and stood solid as a wall against the advancing danger. Their few wills and positive existing rights lent them a force altogether out of proportion to their mass. The opposite was true on the side of the dispossessed. Their wills were many and flaccid just through lack of exercise in a world where it was their hap to obey and not to order. Should this initial handicap be transcended and more or less concerted movements made under some peasant leader<sup>2</sup> or recalcitrant noble, the lack of armament, of precision of aim, of general stability of purpose, &c., might lead to utter failure after

<sup>1</sup> *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*, as Tacitus says. Thus the mujiks in Russia before the revolution looked beyond the adjacent bureaucrats to the "little father," who would cure if only he could be made to hear. So the mediæval serfs looked beyond the rapacity of the local laird to the overlord, who sometimes was actually more merciful, if only to thirl the peasantry to his side in his centralising aims. So the Jews, left only with Sanhedrims and Governors that were all too efficient in their rapacity, craved a Messiah descending from the ancient royal line, if not from Heaven itself.

<sup>2</sup> "Popular" leaders in ancient insurrections were rare. Spartacus himself might not have been a "man of the people," while the Gracchi were actual aristocrats. So were some mediæval "rebels," and not a few leaders in the French Revolution. Cadoudal, however, was a real peasant, but his motives in the Vendean war were not quite in line with the reactionary nobility who sought to make use of him, it is said, for their more selfish purposes (Reclus, *L'Homme et la Terre*).

even initial success. Actual treason, too, might soon declare itself in the popular camp. While the populace could do nothing to bribe the nobility, the former could be corrupted *ad infinitum*. Hence serious defections almost from the first, masked perhaps for the time being to lead to more complete betrayal of the unsuspecting zealots in the end. Even if a city or a countryside fell under the control of the insurgents, the spoils problem might prove insoluble, and the movement collapse in selfishness, disunion, and despair.<sup>1</sup> All things considered, therefore, the wonder rather is that insurrections should even have been partially successful rather than that they were so regularly stamped out in blood, sometimes with men like Luther huzzaing on revenge. In any event, the idea of private property encompassed every conceivable form of wealth with a constant tendency to concentration in a very few hands, and with remedies barred on every side by material difficulties, selfish motives, and psychological handicaps of the nature just indicated. Private property therefore, seen through endless vistas of quite "natural" monopolies, became a fundamental characteristic of Civilisation in all its higher historical manifestations.

12. *Government*.—Just as we seem precluded from thinking that humanity was once "promiscuous" as regards sexuality, so we seem barred from believing that absolute "anarchy" ever prevailed politically, at least for any length of time. "Law,"<sup>2</sup> in fact, may be considered as a thing inherent in life. The "consciousness of kind" tends to a certain orderliness and stability within the community made stable by the "awareness" of identities however rough. And "specialisation of function," another fundamental tendency in nature, sets up differentia even in very primitive human communities as it had already done in the animal societies which presumably preceded man upon the stage of life. Thus bees have their queens, their workers and their drones, and ants their empresses, warriors, artisans and slaves. Among the anthropoid apes governance seems ordinarily to be exercised by an elderly male on lines seemingly embodying

<sup>1</sup> Robin Hoods and Rob Roys could much more easily lead men to victory in a successful raid than equitably divide the spoils of conquest.

<sup>2</sup> Of course the word is here used in the widest sense of the term.

a good deal of tyranny, generally acquiesced in apparently in virtue of that "Custom" upon which we cannot lay sufficient stress, regarding life as a whole. But occasionally it would appear anthropoid tyranny may overreach itself, the younger males rushing at the grisly patriarch and supplanting him, though thereby being faced with all the perplexities of the spoils problem just commented on in the human case. In such primitive societies as those of the Australian black fellows government seems to exist almost as in the air breathed by the community, the sense of Custom being all-pervasive, the little societies trailing along the influences of habit with them as the earth carries the atmosphere with it in its journeys round the sun. Custom is thus "Law" in Australia as in the case of many other primitives. In so far as that does not suffice, governance in Australia seems to belong to the greybeards of the community, who may order the location of camps and their breaking up, the plan of campaign in the ceaseless search for food, the order of battle in the day of strife, the ceremonial in the night of feasting, and the propitiations directed towards the unknown God. And with the mention of that last word, there comes into play a strong element in the idea of government. A discussion still rumbles along in sociology as to whether or not some races are entirely without any idea of "God." As everything depends upon the meaning of that term, it is possible that all views could be harmonised if a satisfactory definition could be established, which, however, is not likely.<sup>1</sup> In the present connection, while it can be admitted that speculation may be comparatively lacking in primitive minds, there is yet no race of men that remains unquestioning as regards the processes of nature—the mysteries of birth, of growth, of decay, and of death,<sup>2</sup> the shining of the sun, moon and stars, the blowing of the winds, the falling of rains, and the whole panorama of nature whether baleful or beneficent. But, just as men differ in physical strength, so they vary in intellectual power, in the appreciation of the forces that play around them, and in the assertiveness they may manifest in the conclusions they

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, i. 375.

<sup>2</sup> Savages attribute nearly all death not wrought by visible means to sorcery.



form. In this sphere, where so much remains mysterious, it is obvious that comparative cocksureness may make all the difference between the oracle and the believer, the master and the disciple, the sorcerer and his dupe, the pretender and his victim. In primitive societies it may require only superior pretentiousness in parleying with the obscure and the unseen to get all the popular credit desired. Hence the evolution of medicine men, rain doctors, shamans, sorcerers, wizards, *et hoc genus omne*, with material tribute flowing in as well as spiritual credit, until perhaps some mistake may shatter the credulity even of a savage mind, involving sudden discredit of one pretender<sup>1</sup> and an attachment as unreasonable to a new and perhaps competing necromancer. Sorcery is thus a universal feature of savage life, and chieftainship has demonstrably welled up from this source in the claims of priests and kings whose functions, attributes, and pretensions may have remained confounded long after the advent of absolute monarchy.<sup>2</sup> Among hunters and shepherds, however, there may be little credit conceded or obedience exemplified on the *secular* plane. Chieftainship may be nominal rather than real, and be essentially *ad hoc*. The moment the contingency evoking the need of leadership dissolves there is a reversion towards patriarchalism. Hence in Asia still the validity of the proverb "Everyone here is padishah!" and in Africa the allegation "Sahara is full of sheiks!" It was probably while the State was evolving from Nomadism towards complete tillage that Feudalism appeared. It was, so to say, the half-way house between mere chieftainship of a mainly secular cast and monarchy of a type holding itself divinely ordained. It was essentially a struggle between the force of centralisation that operates in all communities and the older authorities unwilling to surrender one jot or tittle of their customs

<sup>1</sup> Of course it has to be borne in mind that there may be little or no *conscious* deceit involved in primitive religiosity. The wink of the augurs was a comparatively late development in Civilisation, (Frazer *Magic Art*, i. 352).

<sup>2</sup> The Egyptian kings performed priest-like tasks, Assyrian palaces were as much temples as kingly dwellings, Sparta had its two kings, probably "Siamese twins born of church and state," the Roman emperors dabbled in the divine, while the Japanese Shogun and Mikado carried into the nineteenth century an antinomy that may have started with the Troglodytes.

and "rights." Turmoil, confusion, and compromise characterised the struggle in every age and on every continent. For it is here most respectfully but most firmly insisted that Feudalism did *not* arise "as a mixture of Roman law and of barbarian custom," and was not a strictly European manifestation as is still too often asserted. However Feudalism may be defined (and no two scholars agree on the point), it will be found that it existed centuries before Roman law was "invented," and in regions where Latin never obtained<sup>1</sup>: in ancient Egypt, in China, in Japan, in India, in Abyssinia, and even in pre-Columbian Mexico. However that may be, absolute monarchy *did* supervene in all the greater agricultural states,<sup>2</sup> and it not only monopolises the horizons at the dawn of history but it is the chief form of government throughout the ages. Only one striking variation was manifested until modern times. That was the "Republicanism" of which Greece and Rome were the exemplars but not the only practitioners. In so far as the type may not have been carried over from rustic conditions, it was obviously the preponderance of *Mercantilism* in the community which shaped the destinies of the state in other than kingly directions, with, perhaps, a more merciless exploitation of the "people," but with a free patronage of the arts infinitely happier in its results than the smile of despotism. But no monarchy ever was so absolute as permanently to defy the Church, however distinct the institutions might have become. As someone has suggested, "they grew into and out of each other, like trees and climbers in a tropical forest." Priest and King, Church and State, Master and Servant—such are the august crystallisations which society has formed in its

<sup>1</sup> It may not be inapt to observe that the writer is a lawyer "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel and in the perfect law of the fathers" on this point. But the evidence has caused him to renounce the notion indicated as a scholarly obsession.

<sup>2</sup> The reasons for this are perhaps two-fold. Every country has a natural geographical and economic centre—both influences sometimes combining. The power seated at such a centre will centralise the system from that point in the course of time, as Egypt was united by King Menes near the modern Cairo, ancient Italy by Rome, France by Paris, England by London as the greatest tidal centre fronting the continent, etc., etc. In the Feudalistic struggle the centralising power, becoming "the state" *par excellence*, would have the benefit of any peasant recalcitrance against the local lairds motivated as already indicated. See before, p. 26 (note).

progress from Savagery to Civilisation through the operation of all the forces indicated. At the top are monarchs, viewed perhaps as half divine while they are alive, or destined to such honours when they are really dead—princes whose wills are absolute in so far as they do not offend that *Custom* whose subtle potency may remain mightier than the titular head of the society. Monarchs can only be unconventional at their extreme peril, and it is the fewest in numbers who thus defied custom on lines that did not offend popular religiosity or aristocratic privileges which have been equally terrible volcanoes for royalty in the past. If the king is not also a priest and head of the Church, by his side stands the ecclesiastic, perhaps subtly disputing his authority, while round them both are grouped the nobility and gentry, riddled perhaps into shape from out a grosser heap of older Feudalism, an aristocracy which, though tamed, may remain jealous of its privileges against king and priest alike and apt to plot with either in favour of itself. Far beneath the aristocratic union of forces is the despised crowd—mud-stained tillers bent with toil, actually slaves perhaps, or peasant proprietors, or tenants groaning under such state exactions as make their lot no better than that of bondmen, the rarer artisans of the hamlet and cities perhaps free in name but hereditarily fixed in their crafts, the whole structure clinched by the common soldier, also perhaps hereditarily evolved in the community or gathered as a scum off the surface of society (as in pre-conscription times in Europe) or, mayhap, brought in as an alien recruit devoted to the masters that pay him best.<sup>1</sup> The few are wealthy and disdainful, the many are poor if not wholly dispirited and nourishing their sectional disdains and indurated prejudices which tend for ever to inhibit assertiveness against aristocratic spoliation however flagitious. For the social “polarity” already insisted on<sup>2</sup> may continue to affect the communities in their very marrow so to say. Thus in Egypt, despite its hoary monarchical unity, the villagers in the time of Diodorus fought with each other in the name of their sacred beasts. For, while the crocodile might be worshipped in one “nome,” it was slaughtered in another, Egyptian “zoolatry” being full of such inconsistencies.

<sup>1</sup> “Point d’argent, point de Suisse.”

<sup>2</sup> See before, p. 4.

The historian in question indicates one theory to the effect that this factiousness was "invented" by one of the Pharaohs in order the better to keep the people subdued from above. The idea is laughably absurd. Often enough, indeed, people can be kept down because of their disunion. But the tendency to that is instinctive and primordial, and, so far from requiring to be "invented" by any monarch, the trouble has been to check it rather than to "invent" it. Sometimes, indeed, things grew so desperate inwardly that a foreign war was deliberately "invented" as the only means of securing internal stability with small heed to the ruinous reactions that might occur, as when England tumbled into the Wars of the Roses after a debauch of Imperialism in France.<sup>1</sup> The reader, therefore, in scanning universal history cannot keep too close an eye upon the fact that despite a certain political symmetry attained to in any given case, factiousness may persist in not easily rationalised form like that of the ancient Egyptians just commented on, or the "Blues" and "Greens" in Byzantium, Guelph and Ghibelline in mediæval Italy, "Hooks" and "Codfish" in Holland, and Whig and Tory at not a few stages of English history. Even the Jews, despite their keen racial consciousness and their claim "to have come from the loins of Abraham and to be going back to his bosom," are seamed with faction and the feeling of *Caste*.<sup>2</sup> Says Zangwill in his "Children of the Ghetto"—"Spanish Jews, earliest arrivals in England by way of Holland, after the Restoration, are a class apart and look down upon the later imported Ashkenazim, embracing

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare gives striking expression to Imperialism as an alternative to domestic disunion in "King Henry IV."

<sup>2</sup> Caste is but another aspect of the fundamental tendency to "specialisation of function" with disdainfulness added in the attitude towards others differently specialised. Thus sections of aristocrats look askance at each other (the Church, the Army, the Law, &c.), as do the different strata in the bourgeoisie, while the "people" are similarly differentiated, skilled artisans contemning unskilled, butlers despising flunkeys, flunkeys despising cabmen, and cabmen, costers, and so on, down to the utmost people of the abyss. In no section, however, is there any lack of essential self-respect. On the contrary all groups are rather aggressive by instinct. Thus the Australian black fellows and wood Veddahs of Ceylon think themselves the finest fellows in the world (*Omne animal seipsum diligere*, as Cicero says), and would not be averse to moulding it to their conceptions if only they knew how. It is indeed a master-clue in world history, that *all communities are instinctively aggressive*. Hence the innumerable wars both of the civil and imperial kind.

both Poles and Dutchmen in their impartial contempt. But this does not prevent the Pole and the Dutchman from despising each other. To a Dutch or Russian Jew the 'Pullack,' or Polish Jew, is a poor creature, and scarce anything can exceed the complacency with which the Pullack looks down on the 'Litvok' or Lithuanian, the degraded being whose 'Shibboleth' is literally 'Sibboleth,' and who says 'ee' where rightly constituted persons say 'oo'; to mimic the mincing pronunciation of the 'Litvok' affords the 'Pullack' a sense of superiority almost equalling that possessed by the English Jew, whose mispronunciation of the Holy Tongue is his right to rank above all foreign varieties." Government, then, originating as indicated, has as a striking sequel the intensification of the institution of Caste which is by no means confined to India but is rampant still in countries believing themselves to be quite "democratic."

13. *Trade and Commerce*.<sup>1</sup>—There are many primitive communities still which are to be considered as perfectly "self-contained and self-sufficing," with no division of labour except that between man and woman and no caste except the distinction between wizard and believer already touched on. But still Trade, which consists in the exchange of commodities and services, may arise even under very rudimentary conditions. Some districts may produce commodities which another wholly lacks but still thirsts after. Thus ochre and other substances seem to have been bartered over the whole of Australia by the black fellows in their love of ostentation and for the corroborees held under the stars of the Southern Cross. So in Papua, among extremely primitive races, local industries sprang up involving quite an active trade between communities.<sup>2</sup> In the stone ages, too, some areas appear to have had particularly fine material for tools and weapons, while others excelled in workmanship, leading to exchanges in all probability. Thus Trade may be said

<sup>1</sup> There are analogues in the animal world to nearly all the categories hitherto dealt with excepting tools and the ideas of trade now to be indicated. (Some ants seem to possess a rudimentary agriculture.)

<sup>2</sup> Trade, of course, implies the idea of private property almost from the beginning, although, of course, in such communal swopping as took place in Australia, the individual trader might be unknown. Pre-Columbian Peru also was without traders. Its case is dealt with later, p. 332.

to be "instinctive" on man's part, and is as old as his acquisitive faculty. Restrained as it may be under hunting and pastoral conditions, it has nevertheless probably animated the systems from the beginning. To-day the Wood-Veddahs of Ceylon emerge from the gloom of their forests and deposit the produce of their recesses, then retire, and then return to gather what may have been left in exchange by the merchant outside awaiting his chance. So the ancient Phœnicians seem to have traded among the more barbarous tribes of their time—by advances from and retreats towards the heaps piling up side by side in the silent bargaining. It is a far cry from that to the lightning telegraphic fixtures of to-day, but time was of little consequence in those days, and endless haggling is still a feature of Trade in the more leisurely East. In the nature of the case Trade tended to development under tillage, since wants as well as products multiplied in the relative peacefulness for which increasing culture stood. But intelligence is sadly to seek in the handling of the problem on the part not only of the State but of merchants and individuals. Indeed the history of Commerce is a story of chaos in conception and contradictoriness and futility in practice almost beyond belief. Kings and aristocrats frowned on Trade as mean and base, the only honourable occupations being the cultivation of the land (by slaves and retainers of course) and army life.<sup>1</sup> In addition to restrictions that may have arisen spontaneously around Trade in its development (such perhaps as the separation into Guilds<sup>2</sup>) the State authorities imposed artificial checks at every turn. Everywhere sumptuary laws, so-called, regulating diet and adornment were enacted, and everywhere wilfully transgressed despite all penalties. Trade had such attraction for both producer and consumer, for buyer and seller, that illicit influences for ever tended to gain the upper hand even on the part of the law makers themselves. Ancient kings not only winked at infringements but actually participated in them, as did Napoleon in his

<sup>1</sup> That idea prevailed among the more conservative of the German aristocracy, though some of them had taken to trade in recent times as the Samurai in Japan had done.

<sup>2</sup> Guilds were in existence long before the middle ages, with which they are conspicuously associated.

continental blockade when he himself became the greatest of smugglers underneath his own edicts. And not only was merchant jealous of merchant, craft of craft, guild of guild, but also one village was jealous of another village, one town of its nearest neighbour, one province of another province, and nations perfectly green with jealousy of each other. The ideal might either be no trade at all as between the larger economic units, or to export without importing anything but precious metals, whose possession even yet the world confounds with real wealth. The bullion delusion is one of the oldest and most persistent of human fallacies, and has helped to wreck or mar many a civilisation down to our time. Trade was not looked upon as a mutually fructifying affair (it is not so regarded universally even yet), but as a thing of essentially monopolistic value in which nations enriched themselves in beggaring their neighbours. Hence absolute prohibitions as in the case of ancient Egypt,<sup>1</sup> or tariffs as in modern times, all devices which, however "scientific" in character, are found never to compass all the subtleties of Trade which is the most protean of human forces, rendering more or less nugatory every tariff however "scientifically" framed.<sup>2</sup> While the writer is of the opinion that Free Trade would benefit all nations substantially and permanently injure none it is not the intention here to enlarge upon this view.<sup>3</sup> The object rather is to insist that, the gait of nations having been generally protectionist, history is to be constantly appraised in virtue of this elemental force of Trade. As Letourneau says: "Commerce, who can sufficiently ban or bless it—it is a malefactor full of virtue."

14. *Art and Literature*.—There is only one general consideration remaining to be advanced before more positive details are approached in the present study. And here let us again keep as closely as possible to first principles.

<sup>1</sup> At one time in Egypt death was the penalty enacted against traders coming in from the outside. This is Protection with a vengeance!

<sup>2</sup> At the moment of writing the United States has just concluded an attempt to repair breaches in her earlier tariffs, in which there was less "science" than big business "art."

<sup>3</sup> The best, if not the only, plea for Protection is the "infant industry" one. But it is alleged that such infants never grow up, but rather remain constant charges on the community.

All organisms seem to have the power of absorbing more aliment than is necessary to repair waste and propagate the species. The result is a fund of "surplus energy" in the body which may clamour loudly for expression. Such expression is probably to be found in the ceaseless gambols of the young and the more leisurely games and sports of adults. War itself is but an expression to some extent of this surplus energy, since much of the fighting in history seems to have been "for fun." However that may be this "surplus energy" (the fountain perhaps of the "*joie de vivre*") seems to be the source of "art" in all its forms, explaining alike the colouring of flowers, the noonday song of the lark, the midnight passion of the nightingale, the dance of the savage round the crackling bonfire, the strains of Sappho, the paintings of Raphael, and the plays of Shakespeare—inspiring indeed the arts of peace as well as the art of war. Music, poetry, oratory, painting, sculpture—the presence or absence or distinctive character of these arts in the life of a nation are hall-marks of Culture and the basis of historical valuations. What is important to notice now is that, while "race" may have something to do with manifestations of genius or talent in any particular case (and also, of course, the lack of such things or crudities in any results achieved), social, geographical, economic and such-like influences may have a greater power still. In Red Indian life for instance, where there might only be chieftains *ad hoc*, a man had need be a good speaker if he wanted to persuade his peers to any given course of conduct. We consequently find that Red Indian eloquence reached very considerable heights of attainment. In absolute monarchies the man with the gift of speech might laud the sovereign but hardly do anything else without risk to his head. The grandiose and fulsome might therefore exist, but little with the real spark of life be seen in any branch of art. Egyptian and Babylonian literature and art are heavy and conventional compared with the liberty inspired productions of the Greeks, who sadly botched their earliest efforts but learned under freedom, restricted as it was, the secret which despotism may covet but never impart or retain, as the history of later Greece showed when art waned as despotism waxed in strength. Since artistic



efflorescence is the very crown of civilised effort, let the reader therefore remember how much in the evaluation of the past depends upon careful analysis of conditions, and let him for ever avoid the tempting but generally vacuous theory of "race."<sup>1</sup> Certainly the crossing of human stocks, if the types be not too disparate, may be the best guarantee of continued physical virility and assist in the generation of new ideas in the world of spirit—the contact

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* that the Jews were essentially religious and "invented" Monotheism which it was their "mission" to uphold; that the Greeks were a divinely "artistic" breed and were equally appointed to fix an ideal upon the world; that the Romans "discovered" law and providentially inculcated it upon a world unenlightened until their time; that "Celts" are versatile but unstable, while Teutonic races (some people now make exception of the Germans) are politically solid beyond compare, with a power of tutorage which the world would do well to recognise as constituting *their* providential mission, and so on. This theorising seems still to be extremely attractive after the manner set by Gobineau, Taine, Freeman, Green, Motley, Froude, and others, down to Houston Stewart Chamberlain, whose *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* are now seen to have been based upon fancy, and have collapsed in such dust and ruin as surely never blinded the eyes and deafened the ears of philosopher before. In plain fact Monotheism was not only in the air long before the time of the Jews, but an ancient Egyptian monarch made such a cult explicit long before the time of the patriarchs. The Jews too, judged by their own records, were unstable rather than steadfast in the accredited line. The Greeks were certainly great artists, but had no monopoly in that line and, as already indicated, were awkward enough apprentices, and later utterly lost the inspiration which was supposed to be their inalienable singularity. As for "Law" it had been highly codified perhaps in many directions before the time of the Western Empire, as indicated by the case of King Khammurabi, whose elaborate and not unintelligent system antedates the Roman codes as much as ours postdates them. As for the outstanding question of "Celticism" Tennyson's "blind hysterics" look strange to us to-day after the world war, in which any hysteria was mainly on the German side, and any frivolity in London rather than in Paris. In the darkest hours the Parisians maintained a *sang froid* which flouted all the racial dogmas. On the other hand the incorrigible high spirits of Cockneydom is said to have been a considerable factor in "seeing it through." In many cases nobody can say who alone are true Celts, or what they typically and *exclusively* stand for. That is the rock upon which all racial theories founder, the inability to "isolate" traits physical or mental, and to prove by history that any characteristic is fixed and immutable. There may be some residual truth in racial theorising if only we could fix upon it. Even then *conditions* rather than "fixed habits of the blood" may account for the manifestations sought to be explained. In any case these observations indicate the attitude of the writer, who was once an adherent of the racial school, but had to abandon the precepts as throwing no real light upon any page of history. It is therefore suggested now, that the reader should be constantly sceptical of all conclusions founded purely upon the dogmas of "race" that do not take account of every factor constituting the "environment" which never seems absolutely and permanently stable, taking long tracts of time into account.

and clashing of cultures and systems having always been a source of the greatest inspiration in the past. Happily the area of contact is now as wide as the world, and the commixtion perhaps may now be freer from dross and violence than ever before in the infinitely chequered past. The future will show if we cannot now have the peace that we all long for without the degeneracy that some fear, but with the progress that all desiderate.

. . . . .

With these considerations in hand then let us approach "the storied past." Inscrutable as the actual human origins may be, we can yet, in remote vistas beyond the reach of our historical searchlight, picture rude human shapes in the midst of ruder animal forms moving and striving ever in sunshine, in shadow, in moonlight and starlight, through darkness and toils unutterable, towards the satisfaction of the everlasting human needs and the expression of the inexorable spiritual desires. In our mind's eye we can behold the human flockings and fightings by coral reef and tropic shore, in sultry jungles, under the gloom of primeval forests, in endless grassy prairies, on wilderness margins of rock or sand or snow, evening fires in cave, or hut, or casual camping place flush faintly for us on furtive eyes and dusky forms in immemorial groupings of man, of woman, and of child; round every horizon gather dimly seen, dimly comprehending masses, toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing, as they disappear ceaselessly over the verges into the universal sepulchre. Slowly, slowly, among the generations would accrue power over the things in nature, but one discovery would lead on to other inventions, and the growing knowledge, conveyed from tribe to tribe and bequeathed from age to age culminated, in certain latitudes and among certain races, in that advance of knowledge, in range of reasoning, and of civic amenity which we agree to call "Civilisation," and the changes and chances of which, in the midst of ever-menacing forces of barbarism, we shall now proceed briefly to scan.

## PART II

### A REASONED CHRONOLOGY

It has already been sufficiently insisted that we are quite at a loss to say how long it is since man emerged as a separate species in life, or attained to all the "art" required for the foundation of "Civilisation" in the sense already indicated. It may be repeated however that many, many thousands of years ago the human race had spread over the whole habitable earth, and had become stable as regards the main stocks differentiated by *colour* as formerly noted. Hunting was presumably the universal occupation, and it has been remarked what a comparatively small population the globe could then have sustained, and how forlorn and sundered must have been the lives of the inhabitants. In the old world pastoralism emerged with the effect probably of adding fourfold to the density of the populations engaged in it, though we are at a loss to say whether it preceded or succeeded agriculture. The latter, as we have noted, was the great condition precedent of any "Civilisation" worthy of the name. We have seen how nomadism, motivated as suggested, apparently vetoed tillage over the whole earth except in most pottering fashion, and that it required almost complete clostration to enable the seed of Civilisation to bud and bring forth fruit. Such conditions to begin with were only afforded on ample scales in Mexico and Peru in the new world and Egypt and Mesopotamia in the old.<sup>1</sup> How long the American civilisations may have existed before the arrival of the Spaniards we cannot say. They may have been little less young than those

<sup>1</sup> While agriculture may earliest have been practised on petty scales in confined, sheltered areas like some oases to-day, there could not be the density of population inducing the variations necessary to the evocation of culture on any considerable scale.

of Egypt and Chaldæa, but authorities incline to date them thousands of years later. Their case is therefore postponed until our own chronology includes them in its embrace. We therefore begin our reasoned survey with the civilisations of the river valleys of the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Tigris held to be "primary."

#### B.C. 6000 TO 5000<sup>1</sup>

1. *What is the oldest Civilisation?*—If Mexico and Peru are to be ruled out of court for the reason above stated, then we have to figure our earth eight thousand years ago as being everywhere but sparsely peopled with hunters and shepherds, already settled however into the world-ridges of black, brown, yellow, red, and all the intermediate colours known to ethnologists. Only in Egypt and Mesopotamia, unless the carefully sifted relics make sport of our calculations, was there any considerable density of population and any art of life rooting in settled agriculture. Probably many, many generations had been at work earlier than 6000 B.C. redeeming the land by toils unspeakable in defiance of plagues as terrible as those in the records of the Israelites, whose presence in Egypt is not vouched for by any Nilotic evidence yet discovered. It should only add to our admiration for these "pioneers of the prime" that their immense irrigations *were achieved with stone tools alone*, as were also the structures of ancient Mexico and Peru, some of which are yet so truly laid that only a razor can discover the joints. While it is thought, therefore, that actual "Civilisation" can be dated so far back as 6000 B.C., there seems good ground for believing that many centuries of effort preceded these more or less explicit dates. Authorities are not quite sure which river system was earliest the scene of settled culture. Egypt had the credit for long, but, subsequently, discoveries in Mesopo-

<sup>1</sup> It is the object from this point onward to give a reasoned chronology of the main facts in all countries that have cut any figure in history. Since historical events are few to begin with the divisions are millenary, but will later become centenary. Arbitrary as the idea of a "century" may essentially be, it has become an historical imperative as stated in the Preface, and it will be taken advantage of here to work out the conception of parallelism in so far as it can be applied to the dynamics which are our main concern.

tamia seemed to rob her of her originality. The point may for ever remain a debatable one. There is one consideration which the writer cannot remember having seen used as a test on this point, but which may be indicated now. If the reader looks at the map, he will see that Egypt is on the whole better protected by deserts from nomadic incursion than Mesopotamia. No doubt it lies more open to the sea, but in ancient times that was a much more difficult highway for nomadism than the great land routes, albeit the pirate later became a pest like the pastoralist though with less mass-force even in the palmiest Viking days. But, on both sides of the alluvial Nile, the desert has greater amplitude than in Mesopotamia with its highland corridors in the north-east through which the nomads could descend from their immense Asiatic lairs and campaign down stream upon the tillers struggling in the "land between the rivers," for such is the time-honoured rendering of that "blessed word" Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup> The cultivated soil in Mesopotamia was greater than in Egypt despite its hundreds of miles of alignment, since the "ribbons of earth" are in some places only a few feet broad, though stretching out into a few miles here and there. Thus while, in the matter of population, Egypt probably reached "saturation point" at ten millions, Mesopotamia, in its most flourishing times, may have accommodated three or four times more. The ruins in the latter country show that the populations lived in *walled cities*, a feature which seems wholly absent from the Egyptian case.<sup>2</sup> This would indicate a sense of much greater security in the Nile valley, perhaps strengthening the suggestion that this "haunt of ancient peace" was the originator of civilisation. In any case the suggestion is well worth the reader's serious consideration.

2. *Geography*.—A band of deserts stretches diagonally

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<sup>1</sup> The word is here used to cover the cultures of the whole river system, to save more awkward expressions like "Babylonian-Assyrian."

<sup>2</sup> It may be objected that the cities walled themselves for protection against each other rather than against the nomad. But since divisiveness existed in Egypt as well as Mesopotamia, the Nilotic populations would have an equally strong motive to raise up ramparts of mud or cyclopean walls. The closer pressure of nomadism in Mesopotamia is therefore the apparent clue.

across the old world from north-west Africa to Mongolia. The lack of rain which induces the desolation is due to some extent to the lie of the land and the direction of the trade winds wherever they are operative. The drier the atmosphere is the more vapour of water it can contain. It follows that winds blowing from a relatively colder to a relatively warmer region may deposit none of their imprisoned moisture unless mountain ridges should happen to wring their withers. The Sahara, the greatest desert in the world, is the direct result of these inexorable currents. The Soudan and the Arabian and Persian deserts are but prolongations of the greater waste. But, wherever water is available from springs or from mountain streams, very intensive cultivation may take place. But the areas so nourished are small in comparison with the bounty poured out by the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Nile. The Tigris and Euphrates rise in the Armenian highlands not very far from each other, and run south on roughly parallel lines, until they join some miles from the sea—a junction which has been formed in historic times by the rivers' cutting powers and silt formations. The Tigris has a swifter current than the Euphrates and formerly was hardly navigable up stream. Exceptional ferocity in its overflows may have helped to ruin the irrigation works, though the malignity of the nomads has also to be taken into account. It is the melting of the snows in the summer of the northern highlands that produces the inundations which silted over the land between the rivers and made it fruitful so long as the canals remained intact. The Nile from its source to its bourne is a discovery of the nineteenth century. From time immemorial, of course, men probably lived along the full length of the river banks, but those at the source had as little idea of the *débouchement* as the dwellers on the delta had of the true well-springs of the life-giving river worshipped as a very god. Indeed, among the natives still probably only a comparatively few have clearly formed ideas regarding what is one of the greatest rivers of the world in mere geographical length and incomparably the greatest in historical importance. The river as we all know rises in the equatorial regions of the continent with their abundant rainfall. It is these rains

which give the river its constant flow. The advance of the sun polewards in the summer of the northern hemisphere not only melts the snows on the Abyssinian highlands, but projects the rain-band into that country whose torrents give the Nile its overflow and their suspended mud the fertilising principle which annually invades the lower lands. For the upper reaches of the river are inclined to swampiness, and may always be beyond redemption, though projects for reclamation have been mooted time and again. The hanging fire of such projects in these days of steam and electricity may well inspire us with a wholesome respect for the original pioneers who reclaimed the lower reaches with tools so primitive that the work must have been relatively more difficult than a modern contract for the draining of the still existing swamps. The Egypt of history is therefore the limestone country stretching from Assuan to the delta, a distance of some 700 miles, with ribbons of alluvium about ten miles wide conforming to the course of the river in its journey to the sea through the rainless regions, whose immense evaporation tends sensibly to diminish the volume of the flood in the lower reaches. This alluvium forms an area of land only about one-half larger than Yorkshire, but under peaceful, orderly conditions capable, as before stated, of sustaining a population of about ten millions, or about 900 to the square mile, a very considerable density indeed.

3. *Ethnology*.—We do not know who were the first inhabitants of the ancient river valleys which form the centre of the old-world system. Any offshoots from the black, brown, yellow and white races settled in their various continents could have a very natural trysting-place in this locality. This centrality of position indeed may account to some extent for any mental plasticity displayed by the peoples—the contact and clashing of ideas perhaps sharpening the wits of all in the general clearing-house of the world as it was then constituted. The very fragmentary evidence in existence seems to indicate that the Mesopotamian pioneers were a “Turanian” race, perhaps akin to the Turks of later times. Though the Turanians are supposed to be a bed-rock Asiatic people, the earliest speakers of the language (for that is

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the not very satisfactory test employed)<sup>1</sup> may have been inhabitants of the nearer east, sending out shoots to far beyond the Oxus, whence the Turki tribes migrated later towards what *may* have been their earlier homes. In any event the language and culture of the earliest articulate tribes were overlaid by "Semitic" races—speakers, that is to say, of a language cognate to ancient Hebrew and Arabic, though how far the new-comers differed in blood and general habit we can never know. The Persians who are voted "Aryans" (and that, too, of a "crack" type) overlaid the Semitic centres of culture. The Persians were followed by the equally "Aryan" Greeks and by Romans, whose advance, however, was held at arm's length by "Parthians" who may have been largely renascent Persians. Then a new "Semitic" tide washed up from Arabian sources under Islamic impulses. That was again answered by the "Turanian" sweep of the Turks. Thus the circuit of conquests begins and ends with the "Turanians" if the nomenclature is worth anything at all, which is doubtful. Since, however, desolation and depopulation overtook the countries where tradition places the Garden of Eden, we cannot say that a single drop of old Turanian blood flows in the veins of any Mesopotamian tribe to-day. Egypt, perhaps, does not stand for such an ethnic *tabula rasa*. Some peasants by the Nile still reproduce the features found upon the ancient monuments, and it is speculated that the Copts, though varying considerably among themselves, may be as direct heirs of an "original" stock as it is possible to have in this very mongrel world. But in Egypt there was probably very mixed blood from the beginning, and there was continuous dilution through invasions by Ethiopians, Libyans, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks, and modern European races. The precise ethnic results are beyond all divining, though it is perhaps pretty safe to conclude that here, as throughout history in general, the intrusive stocks, being but military handfuls compared with the indigenous

<sup>1</sup> The Sumerian language is "agglutinative" like Turkish, whence rather tempting analogies may be pursued, though there may be no more real ethnic bond between the Sumerians and the Turks than between Londoners and West Indian negroes who speak English in their different fashions.



populations, might be wholly absorbed in a very few generations.

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4. *Science*.—The relative peacefulness for which Tillage stood in Mesopotamia and Egypt must have implied great development in the use of tools. At the period in question both countries were probably very divided, though the necessity for a common policy in connection with the annual inundations might tend to soften asperities if it did not quite stamp out the totemistic and other discord on which we have commented. This political divisiveness may long indeed have been a source of material and intellectual progress, the numberless agricultural communes with perhaps many “bien” farmers inducing a spirit of emulation which latterly almost dried up completely. In any event it is apparent on the face of the case that the populations must long have shown inventive genius of the very highest order. The Egyptians reared monuments so very great that the problem of mechanics involved remains something of a mystery. At the same time they struck out smaller ingenuities which are no less significant in their way—wigs, false teeth, artificial hatching of eggs, and, probably, the lightning conductor.<sup>1</sup> Star-gazing, too, came to be quite a science in Mesopotamia even if sadly mixed up with astrology. Chaldean speculations indeed helped Newton to his mighty conclusions. We have in fact to conceive of Egypt and Mesopotamia as probably passing through eras not unlike that of riotous renaissance Italy, when much of the fighting was so much *pour rire* that a whole day's battle might not produce a single corpse for the vultures. So in Egypt the old hubbubs, embodying some malignity perhaps, still stood for advance in science and art with quite glorious things achieved as later in Italy when the Saracens greatly stimulated the peninsula even in harassing it. Stagnation, of course, came to the ancient states as reactions from imperialism, centralisation, *latifundia*, and the like. But even prolonged periods of barrenness or actual decadence should not blind us to the really inimitable merits of the founders of Civilisation in all its essential forms. Thus “pioneers, oh pioneers!” may well be the enduring salute of all later ages to the

<sup>1</sup> Reclus, *L'Homme et la Terre*.

dim spirits of Akkadians, Sumerians, and Egyptians toiling for ages in the central mud of our little universe, and establishing not only bountiful harvests for themselves, but driving in the piles upon which our Civilisation still rests, as the marble palaces of Venice to-day were made possible by the efforts of the unknown fisher folk haunting the ancient Adriatic lagoons.

5. *Government and Law*.—Ancient Egypt has left us no code of laws, but Babylon has bequeathed us that of the now famous Khammurabi, which was elaborated some twenty-five hundred years before the time of Christ. Enough has already been said in principle to indicate that, even in the much earlier period in hand, the social forces must have struck out crystallisations if on a lesser scale than the code just referred to. Some of the pettier customs and codes, too, may have had redeeming features which the later elaborations lacked, even as some savage ideas to-day might be able to give "points" to Europe.<sup>1</sup> In any event, though details are wholly lacking as to the great formative periods of the ancient states, inferences need not completely fail us. Thus, as someone has suggested, "we can fill up the picture with the pigments of principle that can alone apply, and give a countenance to the otherwise featureless past." So we can feature the primary tillage communities outgrowing the older nomadic customs with much strife of wills on all the new grounds of social action, and with many felicities attained to before general initiative was overcome by the everlasting tendencies to monopoly, specialisation, and centralisation, which end in the petrification of institutions with new "liquefactions" so rare or obscure as to make the cultures bywords of stagnation, as was ancient Egypt to the Greeks in their own innovating period, or as China is to Europe at the present moment. The case of Japan, however, can show us what vast adaptations there may be in response to new impacts from without, which have so often been the agencies of advance on fresh lines when inward inspiration seemed to be wholly dead. Not centuries, therefore, but thousands of years may have elapsed before the powers of beneficial co-ordination died

<sup>1</sup> "The strictness and celerity of Hottentot justice are things in which they outshine all Christendom" (Westermarck, work cited).

out by Babylonian rivers and Nilotic floods, leaving the cultures "set in saplessness"—aristocratic despotism flanked by popular impecuniosity with the whole fixed in a rigid framework of Caste being almost the only things that meet the eye as the pages of history open.

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6. *Trade and Commerce*.—From what has already been said as to very primitive conditions giving rise to Trade it can be concluded that, even eight thousand years ago, there was much swopping of commodities along the banks of the Nile and by the double floods of Mesopotamia. Of course, there would be desperate attempts to enforce sumptuary laws and "protect" province against province, kingdom against kingdom, and, latterly, empire against empire. But always the desire for exotics and for the greater gains to be earned in the smuggling trade would tend to set at naught the spider's webs of restriction. Egypt apparently made desperate efforts to be self-contained and self-sufficing, but in vain. The country had need of the stones at a distance for its gigantic buildings, of wood for its coffins, of spices and other articles for the embalmment which became such an obsession that it sometimes ruined people before they were actually dead, and so on. These imports called for exports to work out the necessary equation, and so trade of an international kind became persistent even before the days of Psammetichus (500 B.C.), when the country was "opened up" as were China and Japan in our day. Since the Mesopotamian lands in their heyday had a greater productivity than Egypt, their trade would also be greater, and Babylon indeed, being the real centre of the then civilised world, had a prodigious industry which seems to have been supreme for thousands of years. Britain's "supremacy" in the modern world, though far greater could it be measured by the yearly value of the transactions, pales into utter insignificance so far as the time comparison applies—some two hundred years as against two thousand. And we may regard the fifth millennium B.C. as perhaps the real beginning of this "supremacy."

7. *Literature and Art*.—It is generally agreed that the ancient Greeks attained to what is considered perfection in literature and art. The explanation most frequently advanced is that they did so because they were divinely

gifted, if not indeed "appointed," to reveal these things as their "historical mission." The explanation leaves out of account that the Greeks visibly grew up from mediocrity into thorough competency and relapsed into an ineffectuality that has lasted till our time. While it may be true that communities have the "divine mission" indicated, it is here repeated that much more profitable lessons may be obtained by analysing *conditions* for special emanations and manifestations of the genius of humanity which inheres rather in the *species* than in any particular "race." While it is true, therefore, that art in the primary civilisations took the way of the grandiose rather than the graceful, that was obviously due largely to the influences making up the "environment." Thus towers of Babel (which may not be fanciful) and pyramids (which were all too real facts, if they were reared by the forced labour of the multitude as so often asserted) sprang perhaps from an architect's hope to rear something above the monotony of the tawny desert plains, and of a despot's desire to perpetuate his deeds to all generations of men. But, while an architect may have been free to express the natural bent of his genius, the cast-iron despotism of kings might inhibit all artistry depending upon freedom as the very breath of its life. Thus great poetry might never well up above the thick despotic film of things, or its open expressions might succumb to a more complete coercion than even the epic of Firdousi, "the Persian Homer," as he has been called. Perhaps even the preservation of the real Homer's verses was due to "political accident" as much as anything else, since Peisistratus, "tyrant"<sup>1</sup> as he was, had that mercantilist appreciation of art which thorough despots generally lacked.<sup>2</sup> Thus, though Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt have left us no poetry or prose worthy of the name,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This word, it should be noted, had not, in ancient times, the sinister meaning it now bears. The old "tyrants" inclined to lean upon the people in a struggle with close "oligarchies," whose rule was less "democratic" than that of the temporary "boss."

<sup>2</sup> See before, pp. 30, 36.

<sup>3</sup> A few Egyptian poems, songs, and stories survive, but are of no real artistic merit. The famous *Book of the Dead* is ritualistic, funerary and prosaic, and might well bear the title "How to dodge into Heaven." The genius of the later Egyptians seems to have largely exhausted itself in the tremendous mythology, awe-inspiring even in its fragmentariness,

that may be as much due to "political accident" as in the other case. For almost certainly, eight thousand years ago there were love songs of man to maid by the banks of the ancient rivers, in the dawn of the lucent mornings, or under the starlight of the cloudless skies; even among the most bovine multitudes inextinguishable folk-lore must have continued being shot through with threads of the purest gold; while, in the "feudal" days that assuredly preceded the despotisms, bards may have twanged their harps throughout the "nomes" of Egypt, or at the courts of the "patesis" in Mesopotamia, vaunting the love that can never die, and—

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Singing of men that in battle array,  
March with banner, and bugle and fife,  
To the death for their native land.

In a word Troubadorism began, not in our Middle Ages, but in the earliest ages of all, though the Egyptian lays and "sad Sumerian songs" died out of knowledge before the rearing of the pyramids or the hanging gardens of Babylon.

#### B.C. 5000 TO 4000

*Egypt.*—According to tradition King Menes, about 4400 B.C., built the city of Memphis at the strategical point commanding the delta and the upper reaches of the river. The ancient capital was near the site of the modern Cairo. Menes is credited with unifying the country and founding what is known as the "First Dynasty." Thirty others followed, the whole covering a period of about 4000 years—a figure that quite dwarfs our European computations. A dike attributed to King Menes is said still to survive "and secures the whole province of Gizeh from the floods." According to the historian Manetho, Menes met his death through being swallowed by a hippopotamus when campaigning against the Libyans. These tribes dwelt west of the mouths of the Nile, but their locations on the coast and in the hinterlands are matters we are told. Mesopotamian literature is about as sadly to seek as Egyptian, consisting only of a few hymns, incantations, and litanies which are very mediocre from the artistic point of view. Parts of an epic poem have been discovered. It tells of the descent of Ishtar, the Assyrian Venus, into hell, and may have inspired Homer who influenced Virgil who, later, was taken by Dante as his "guide" through the Inferno.

of speculation.<sup>1</sup> It has already been noted that an efficient way of bringing about internal political unity is to start imperialising outside. Whether the expedition of Menes had such a motive we cannot say, but the coincidence is there. The second king of this dynasty—Teta—is said to have written a work on anatomy, “or perhaps added his name to what some poor devil devised.” “The Book of the Dead” refers several times to King Hesepti (Semti). He owned a medical work which passed on to a king of the Second Dynasty. An ebony tablet now in the British Museum represents Hesepti dancing before the god Osiris—the priest-like function still being confounded with the kingly character apparently. The First Dynasty is believed to have ended with the seventh King Semen-Ptah (Semsu), in whose reign, according to Manetho, there was a terrible pestilence. There were three kings of the Second Dynasty, whose names do not matter here. The last, who died about 4000 B.C., is said to have established the right of female succession—a modification of the subjection of woman which, however, may have been strictly confined to the aristocracy.

*Mesopotamia.*—It was sometime about 5000 B.C. that the ancient Sumerian-Akkadian<sup>2</sup> culture began to be over-run by “Semites.” If they came from Arabia, as is speculated, then there was a mass movement anticipating Mohammed’s by more than five thousand years. Arabia until the “hegira” was probably butted in upon far more than it imperialised outside its deserts and steppes. The ancient Semites became the “Babylonians” of history. But Mesopotamia, unlike Egypt, was long to remain a country of separate and warring principalities with king-like priests and priest-like kings known as “Patesis”—temples apparently forming the centres of city life. Kings of Kengi, Kish, Gishban, and Shirpurla rise like wraiths to the historical surface to vanish instantly into common indistinction like waves in the sea, until towards 4000 B.C. the superficial agitation almost wholly subsides to the eye in a historical dimness much denser than the “dark ages” of Europe. But behind the spectral kings we can figure

<sup>1</sup> The Egyptians may have gone by sea as well as by land.

<sup>2</sup> Sumer was the southern portion of what later was known as Babylonia, while Akkad was the northern.

the dim millions of humanity labouring on in their water-logged and sun-cracked fields, scattering the grain and reaping the harvests that formed the real bases of the cultures, and made them survive from century to century despite every political eclipse.

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#### B.C. 4000 TO 3000

*Egypt.*—This millennium contains the record of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth dynasties, with Civilisation, which had been rapidly developing at the beginning of the era, entering on a "decline." That sickness however was not mortal, but rather the precursor of still greater progress later on. About 3900 B.C. there was, according to Manetho, a revolt of the Libyans, who however submitted "on account of an unexpected increase in the moon." This is one of the earliest instances on record of the power of what *we* call superstition upon decisions in grave enough national contingencies. The "auspices" played a tremendous part in ancient civilised life as they do in some cultured quarters still, and form a perfect oppression in some parts of savage Africa. In ancient times military as well as secular movements might be brought to a standstill or thrown into utter confusion by some derangement supposed to reflect the will of the gods, as declared in the appearance of the sun or the moon or flashes of lightning, or by the entrails of the birds disembowelled for the penetration of the heavenly secret. It is well known how the Spartans delayed going to the help of the Athenians during the Persian assault, because of a superstition connected with lunar periods. More striking still is the case of the Roman Consul who, when the sacred chickens would not eat, chucked them overboard, saying "Let them drink then," and of course suffered defeat for his impiety. There is also the case of the Jewish fortress which was surprised by Roman soldiers who had taken note of the besieged's inactivity on the Sabbath, and went forth triumphantly to the assault because no superstition of their own impeded movement on that particular day. If any nation in antiquity had been as secularly minded as Frederick the Great (who said that his people must all get to Heaven

in their own way), then it might have conquered the world more by its own disbelief than by the sword. One of the kings of the third Egyptian dynasty built the "Step Pyramid of Saqqarah," declared to be "the oldest of all large buildings which have successfully resisted the action of wind and weather and destruction by the hand of man" (Budge).

About 3766 B.C. Sneferu, the first king of the Fourth Dynasty, was apparently warring against the "robber tribes" of the desert, conquering the Sinaitic peninsula because of its mineral wealth, but being lauded instead of denounced for *his* predatoriness. The dynasty however is regarded as a peaceful one, its great monuments being the Great Pyramids, including that of Khufu or Cheops. Though the Pyramids may continue to impress men to the end of time, it has become a commonplace observation that they may be monuments rather of oppression and social degradation than of monarchical "brilliance." The next dynasty springing from a priestly source had five kings, whose reigns cover a period of nearly 300 years. No great monuments mark that period, but perhaps there was more well-being among the people. The oldest writing, known as the "Papyrus of Accounts," belongs to the reign of the second last king of this dynasty, which like the others ended mysteriously. The Sixth Dynasty covers the period from 3300 to 3000 B.C. The kings seem to have been vigorous to begin with, raising many monuments and imperialising a good deal, which probably brought the dynasty to an end in general disorganisation. It produced the first Egyptian Queen known to history, the "Nitocris" of Herodotus, round whose memory much legend has clustered. She is said to be the original "Cinderella": her tiny shoe, picked up by an eagle, was dropped into the lap of the king, who thereupon instituted a search for the owner and married the maid, as romance will have it, in defiance of all the caste customs in the world.

*Mesopotamia.*—The kingdom of Shirpurla formerly referred to, which seems to have been non-Semitic, apparently lived a life of considerable culture if in difficulty and confusion. A new kingdom of Ur (identical with that of the Chaldees referred to in the Bible) obtrudes itself



only to the extent of two kings with almost unpronounceable names.<sup>1</sup> There are likewise two kings of the State of Guti and Lulubi, but the historical void is filled only by their names. Then a kingdom of Agade asserts itself with a new sense of potency, despite the paucity of the material. The first ruler, Sargon I, "founded an empire from Elam to the Mediterranean and from the extreme south of Babylonia to Apirak and Guti." His monuments are engraved seals of wonderful execution as well as inscriptions and contract tablets. Under his successors it is said there were judges, musicians, physicians, good roads, &c., and organisation was so pronounced as to be considered "a culminating point in the history of the old Orient." But thereafter facts fail for centuries, a "second kingdom of Ur," a "kingdom of Erech" and another "of Isin" contending with each other "in the most meagre, highly condensed confusion known to history," as it has been put.

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*Egypt.*—The seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth dynasties occupy the first three hundred years of this period, but we have no real light as to the ebb and flow of monarchical power—how much pure failure of stock there may have been as in the case of the Tudor line with Queen Elizabeth, or determined supplanting of dynasties as with the Stuarts. What the reader should take note of at this point is that Egypt, which had probably remained almost inviolate since the establishment of political unity, began seriously to suffer aggression from without. The mechanical efficiency which had been developing in the centres of Civilisation could not be confined to the cultured river valleys, and the "art of war" was stimulated among the nomads by the copying of civilised devices, thus making the border peoples a serious menace, such as India long confronted in the Afghanistan of our time. In any event the nomads were now on the move, and though a wall was built across the Isthmus of Suez to keep them out, it seems no more to have completely effected its purpose than the mammoth rampart later built in China, which the nomads laughed at as they rode through the breaches. The result in Egypt

<sup>1</sup> Lugal-kigubni-dudu and Lugal-kisali his son.

was a period of confusion which shook the whole Memphite kingdom to its base. The capital was shifted up the river to Heracleopolis. The deltaic turmoils would naturally cause such forces of consolidation as remained to seek out new centres of stability, and the reader should note that relative repose was attained to at the strategical point already referred to where the Nile, below the cataracts, approaches nearest to the Red Sea. So a new capital emerged at Thebes, which scrupled not to war with the disgruntled deltaic states, and, after a century of struggle in which there was probably a recrudescence of "Feudalism," the old Memphis kingdom was brought to an end. The "old Theban, or Middle Kingdom" as it is called, lasted for about a thousand years and counts six dynasties (the eleventh to the seventeenth), whose title-deeds we can no more reconstruct than those of earlier times. Here we can continue to note only the more striking items that have been painfully fished up out of the still obscure records. About 2500 B.C. there was a voyage to "Punt and Ophir" under the noble Hannu, whose account of the journey has been deciphered from a partially defaced inscription. He evidently started from Coptos (the modern Kossier) on the Red Sea due east from Thebes, which was then probably a well-worn route for private traders or smugglers, whose object, however, would be to conceal rather than to blazon their deeds in order to conserve their gains or monopolies. Hannu seems to have had three thousand men and as many donkeys under his command, and he gives interesting commissariat details as to water supply, &c. The object of the expedition was to bring sweet-smelling spices to Pharaoh, which may have been "cornered" somehow, inducing the monarch to go into the "wholesale" line himself as the late German Kaiser is said to have done on occasion. We do not know exactly where "Punt and Ophir" were, but it is supposed the places touched at and traded with were on the coast of the modern Somaliland. The journey may have been no great feat after all—something of an "edited incident" perhaps, like Louis XIV's crossing of the Rhine, which, as Voltaire said, "was crossed every day by the old ferry-woman with no song about it whatever." The twelfth Egyptian dynasty is on the whole said to

have been great in peace and war. Lake Moeris was constructed as a reservoir for the overflow of the Nile (a much more commendable effort than any pyramid), also the Labyrinth palace, the Temple of Karnak, and the "hundred-gated Thebes" itself. Then came another period of "decline," lasting perhaps for centuries, in which five dynasties were used up. The Hyksos or Shepherd Kings thrust themselves as forcibly into the system as did the Vikings into France or the Norsemen into England.<sup>1</sup> When the shepherds arrived or where they came from we know not, but they drove the scions of the old dynasty into the delta, where they dodged the aggressors as did Hereward the Wake in the English Fens, or the Spanish recalcitrants skulked alike against the Romans and Moors in the mountains of Asturias after the Roman and Moorish invasions.

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*Mesopotamia.*—Confused kingdoms of Isin, Ur, and Larsa continue to declare themselves in half-gibberish fashion in Mesopotamia from 3000 to about 2300 B.C. Then a relatively tangible and homogeneous "Kingdom of Babylon" asserts itself and begins to monopolise the Mesopotamian stage, if still with much dynastic confusion. Later (about 2300 B.C.) we come to the now grand figure of Khammurabi, whose fame is likely to grow through the ages along with that of his "Code," which has effectually knocked on the head the contention of the "legists" that the Romans "invented" law in virtue of their "mission" already commented upon. It is now patent that more than two thousand years before Roman jurists quite got their bearings a Babylonian potentate, more enlightened perhaps than Justinian, set his seal upon a great effort, co-operative in the very nature of the case, which was probably the work of obscure individuals who get none of the credit which goes to the Justinians or the Napoleons in whose time the work was achieved.

Khammurabi's code is not only very detailed but very humane in many of its features. On these points the reader must however refer to the code itself in its now accessible forms, since there is no room here for further comment.

<sup>1</sup> It is surmised that the Hyksos, probably few in numbers, may have conquered in virtue of horses and chariots till then perhaps unknown in Egypt.

It may however be noted in passing that Khammurabi, as the ruler over great domains and varied interests, had perhaps the same need to codify that was urged upon the Romans much later. It may also be remarked that Khammurabi is supposed to be the Amraphel of the Bible, and was thus a contemporary of Abraham, who in those days was wrangling with other petty sheiks over the bare pasture grounds in the deserts between Babylon, Syria, and Egypt. The Mosaic law was still a thousand years away from the codification that we know! The later kings of the Khammurabi dynasty are supposed to have lived in almost complete peace, presiding over highly civilised and prosperous communities whose international relations may have added to the general weal. For, though alien Hyksos may have ruled in Egypt, that no more signified real social eclipse than did the hold of William the Conqueror in England. Indeed the Bastard of Normandy, by "legitimizing" his rule on both sides of the channel, stimulated England by the very fact of union (culturally perhaps as well as economically) in giving greater scope to those undercurrents that run beneficently beneath the surface tumults in every country.

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The four thousand years which we have traversed with such swift steps have been through only *two* great countries, easily conceived of in their geographical lineaments and viewed as surrounded by barbarism or savagery in nearly all the world beside. Though kings have often been but combinations of syllables, thrones and dynasties but spectral things behind the names, and peoples but phantasmal and voiceless multitudes thronging the imagined countries, there will be great gain in the retrospect if our minds remain impressed with the indubitable fact of *Culture* having originated in these old-world cloisters, and having become peacefully stabilised despite dreadful enough oscillations due not only to inward waywardness, but more particularly perhaps to the ruder pressures from without. It has already been indicated that if the whole world were once brutish and savage, relatively peaceful individuals must have emerged as variations in

every stock, seeking to mould society in more fruitful and "pacifist" ways. Thus tendencies to agriculture might crop out spontaneously in the rudest communities, as we know historically they did among the Red Indians, who, so to say, "were caught in the act" at the discovery of America. But we have seen how the "will to agriculture" suffered under the most dreadful handicaps—the softer temper of the tillers making them helpless against recalcitrant nomadism in the absence of locations and frontiers that would at once encourage and protect in the original disposition of things. But, though Egypt and Mesopotamia alone in the old world supplied the pre-requisites of culture, it is not to be supposed that the motives towards Civilisation could be permanently suppressed in *every* other quarter. The instincts being really insuppressible may have required only longer time for their triumph in other corners of the nomadic world. While, therefore, culture was flourishing in Egypt and Mesopotamia we are warranted in concluding that the forces which had there found *precocious* expression were also actually at work outside with great enough results if visible now only to the "scientific imagination." In any case cultures *did* appear in other quarters, probably put upon their feet by the influences emanating from the ancient river valleys even if their systems were "hoary with time and weary with pilgrimage" when their missionary work began. Be that as it may, in the millennium we are now briefly to scan country after country will be seen emerging from its obscurity, if remaining folded in thick mists of doubt. At the end the threefold continental system of the old world will be found colonised for culture, if still only in the more propitious coasts and hinterlands of Asia, Africa, and Europe. While keeping up a running comment upon the primary civilisations as heretofore we shall, in addition, indicate in this section the dynamic considerations that apply to each new culture as it appears upon the scene, even should we thereby somewhat outrun the strict chronology of the case.

*Egypt.*—About 2000 B.C. the Hyksos are consolidating their rule in Egypt, but adopting the language and habits of the country. But elements, at least, of native dynasties were either allowed to survive or could not be quite

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crushed out. The popular memory, though short in some ways, is remarkably long in others. So, after about five hundred years of hegemony, the Hyksos were driven into Asia by the resurgent native stocks, looking back in all probability to "good old times" that may actually have been worse than the conditions being revolted against. It is pretty much as if the Stuarts were to be restored to the British throne to-day by some turn of fortune backing up the few "Jacobites" who still exist in our midst. The "New Theban Kingdom," as it is called, trailed on through some fourteen dynasties for about thirteen hundred years until the conquest by Alexander the Great brought the semblance of independence, for what it was worth, to an end. But Egypt under the post-Hyksos dynasty began imperialising with even greater success than similar attempts in older times, Tehutimes III (*circa* 1530) being considered the "great conqueror" of Egyptian history. For weal or for woe the Syrian and other now competing cultures were beginning to make their impression on Egypt. About 1420 B.C. Amenhotep IV (Khun-Aten) with his court renounced the national religion with its many deities, and substituted what is described as "a strictly monotheistic worship of Aten, the sun's disk—a conception that tallies marvellously with modern knowledge of the sun as a source of power and energy. The whole movement shows an intellectual stride of tremendous proportions. In the hymns of the new sun-god we seem to have the first trace of the idea of the brotherhood of man."<sup>1</sup> Monotheism had probably been "in the air" long before this time, since "reason" had become very highly developed in some individuals, and it would be strange indeed if some genius could not have reached past the mob of deities to the idea of unity. Amenhotep's creed may have been partly dictated by priestly interference urging him to a course of speculative simplicity wherein the ecclesiastic could meddle less. In any event the "heresy" was unfitted to the popular mind and was suppressed about sixty years after its promulgation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Historians' History of the World*, i. 72.

<sup>2</sup> The tomb of one of the "heretic" kings, Tut-Ankh-Amen, was discovered while these lines were being revised. At the moment of writing it has not been fully explored, but the wonderful works of art show that the break away from the past signified apparently great cultural advance.

With the aggressiveness instinctive to all communities the Egyptians whom we first saw campaigning outside in Libya and Sinai were in this millennium active against Nubia, Ethiopia, Syria, and Palestine, and were engaged in diplomatic fencings with Babylonia. In the pushes northward the Egyptians struck up against the Empire of the Kheta, now believed to be the Hittites of Scripture, whose part in history seems to have been unexpectedly great in ancient times. We do not know to what stock the Hittites belonged, but they are believed to have been non-Semitic, judging by the squatness and fleshiness pictured on the monuments. In any event the Kheta seem to have maintained a not inconsiderable Empire in Asia Minor for about a thousand years—for a longer space of time than the Empire of Rome itself lasted. And it is remarkable, too, that the Hittites were the only people who ruled Asia Minor *solely from within*. That sub-continent with its frontages on the Mediterranean, the Dardanelles, and the Black Sea, and with no definable eastern borders, formed one of the most difficult centres of Empire, since it could be raided from all quarters and on different sides simultaneously. Thus it was lorded over by Assyria and Persia, by the Greeks under Alexander, and by the Byzantines and Turks from their European fortresses. So if the singularity is any credit to the Hittites, let them have it by all means.<sup>1</sup> The Egyptians had serious passages at arms with this mysterious people, with the advantage by no means assured on the Egyptian side. A treaty between the belligerents has come down to us, which is considered “the most ancient monument of diplomatic science.” Equality and perfect reciprocity were to exist between the two countries and the treaty was declared “eternal”! Rameses II, called “the great,” who is supposed to be the Pharaoh of the oppression, married the eldest daughter of the King of Kheta—a very old device intended to harmonise refractory if not irreconcilable interests, the *arrière pensée* on each side being to get the best of a generally insincere bargain. After the great Rameses<sup>2</sup> Egypt fell into another

<sup>1</sup> The point is one dwelt on by Reclus, *L'Homme et la Terre*.

<sup>2</sup> The *Poem of Pentaur*, as it is called, was an official epic inscribed by Rameses on the walls of temples to celebrate his exploits against the Kheta, which he perhaps exaggerates. For this king is one of the most

"decline," and the Ramessides were banished by high priests who clutched at a unity of the secular and the sacerdotal that has never been anything but momentary or accidental, and was soon overthrown in Egypt by a new "house" called the Tanites from the place of its appearance. So ends this era on the banks of the Nile.

*Mesopotamia.*—After Khammurabi in Babylonia some eleven kings of "Sumerian" origin, about whom little is known, seem to have reigned for nearly four hundred years. Then, about 1700 B.C., mountaineers from Elam established a dynasty (the Kassites)<sup>1</sup> which ruled over regions greater than those under the sway of Khammurabi. But, within the next four hundred years, a sterner power began to menace the Babylonian domains, working down from the Zagros highlands in the north-east. This was Assyria, supposed to be an old colony of Babylonia. The Assyrians were a "Semitic" people, but drops of steel seem to have got into their blood as contrasted with the Babylonians, even as the Prussians stand out as fierce-tempered compared with the south-west Germans, whom they dominated by the policy of "*eisen und blut*." Crafty, cruel, cold-blooded but virile, the Assyrians exploited Babylonian science for centuries as the Turks latterly did that of the milder Saracenic and Christian populations, and Nineveh ultimately blazoned its might to the very heavens, while the kings tortured right and left,<sup>2</sup> and transplanted whole peoples from

remarkable instances in history of despotic "swelled head." Rameses is seen worshipping himself in the temples, and he evidently considered himself wellnigh superhuman.

<sup>1</sup> It seems that at this time the horse (known to the Babylonians as the "ass of the East") was first introduced into Mesopotamia and Egypt. The Aryans had apparently domesticated it much earlier. As tripling the speed of man and giving a new "shock" power in battle, it must have spelt great advantage to the barbarians if less than to the Spaniards in Red Indian America, where firearms supplemented horsemanship.

<sup>2</sup> Assyrian kings not only tortured their prisoners, but became ecstatic in the thought of the towns committed to the flames and human beings consigned to death. Says one potentate, "Every second person was killed. I constructed a wall before the gates of the town, I skinned the chiefs of the revolt, and covered the walls with their hides. Some were built living into the masonry, others crucified or impaled along the wall." Their rage even directed itself against the dead, Assurbanipal boasting that he carried away the bones of the kings of Elam, imposed iniquitude upon their shades, and deprived them of libations. Perhaps it was the nomadic strain in the Assyrians that caused a bloodthirstiness which Red Indians seem hardly to have surpassed.



north to south and east to west the better to overcome the sense of nationality which is really not a modern manifestation as is still too often declared, but a very old form of mass-consciousness. It is true that it was unstable formerly, but has now become an indestructible principle in society through the influences of all the forces of education to-day. Nations like the Poles, Serbians, Czechs, Greeks, Bulgars, and Irish went back to the fabled origins of the race, lovingly conned the mustiest records, and accumulated fierce and feverish desires of reassertion which too often have taken the form of dragooning others when freedom came their way. So instinctive and deep-rooted is the aggressiveness which in these pages is always held in view as a first principle of interpretation, that nations long subject to political yokes and sighing and weeping in captivity, like the Jews in Babylonia, hardly seem able to learn the lesson of toleration which yet was implied in their ceaseless protest. Before 1300 B.C. the Assyrians were grappling with the Babylonians in deadly combat, and, about 1280, Babylon itself was taken, the treasures removed from the temples, and the god Marduk carted off to Assyria even as the Philistines appropriated the Ark of the Covenant. Though Babylon was retaken and Assyrian influence declined even as did that of the English after Bannockburn, Babylonia remained in deadlier peril than ever, as did Scotland when Bruce's son was led captive into England and the "Southrons" campaigned beyond the Grampians. In the fight between Assyria and Babylonia it is steel against iron until a barbarism more effective than the cruelty of the crowned tigers of Asshur and Nineveh wipes the polity from the face of the earth in the manner we shall see.

*The Jews.*—Time was when every world-history began with the creation of the earth and Adam and Eve, dealt diligently with the Jewish patriarchs, and then meandered more broadly among prophets, priests, and kings, before deigning to take more than incidental notice of affairs in the "secular" world. All that is changed. Though there may still be a weakness for starting with the nebular hypothesis and working up preliminaries in geology, biology, and anthropology, even ecclesiastics whose orthodoxy is beyond reproach now concur in giving first

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place to the men of the stone ages and to the tillers of Egypt and Mesopotamia before bringing the Jews on the scene. And, in very truth, the Scriptures themselves always showed clearly enough that the Jews, though claiming to be a "peculiar" people,<sup>1</sup> did not conceal the fact that other polities were mightier than their own even in the palmiest days of the undisrupted monarchy. Unsettling as much of the higher criticism may be, there should be no doubt that the Jews were once a pastoral people, much buffeted perhaps, wandering from continent to continent in the semi-deserts between Syria, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. Though no Egyptian remains so far vouch for the fact, the "descent into Goschen" is yet a probable enough thing, since other clans seem to have dribbled Nilewards in non-aggressive mood and were not inhospitably dealt with. But whether the Jews were patronised on Joseph's account, multiplied as alleged, were enslaved as freely avowed, delivered with the "high hand" narrated in Scripture, and "half-led and half-withheld by Jehovah" through the wilderness is now held to be in the gravest doubt. In this connection the reader can have no scruple in keeping a perfectly open mind. He might quite well scrap the whole story of the captivity and let his point of departure for the rationalisation of Jewish history be the invasion of Canaan, with what amount of aggression does not really matter. For the history of Israel from this point onwards conforms strictly to the ordinary principles of interpretation outlined in these pages without dogmatising as to "Providence" one way or another. Thus, in the matter of government, so long as the semi-pastoral conditions lasted chieftainship would be mainly *ad hoc*, as formerly commented on. "The Judges" stand for a substantially true picture of the trans-Jordanic life according to all the secular probabilities of the case. Equally does the monarchical development come into line with the principles generally operating. The deepening agricultural life of the nation would tend to consolidation voluntary as well as forced. For there may have been adjustments like that between England

<sup>1</sup> Of course other nations made similar claims, but not with the "damnable iteration" of Israel, which has got more outsiders to credit the idea than in any other cases—though the Jews are hard run upon in this respect by the Arabs, that other "people of the Book."

and Scotland, as well as coercive assimilations as in the case of Ireland. We cannot really say how clean cut, in the older Palestinian days, may have been the tribalism insisted on in the Scriptures. On the face of the case the Jews were anything but "pure" in blood when they entered Canaan, having at their heels that "mixed multitude" which is one of the most truthful looking traits in the narrative. In all probability both as regards blood and territory there may have been as much confusion, interpenetration, and instability as among the clans of the Scottish highlands in historical times. There would thus be alliances, ruptures, and reunions which negate the idea of any symmetry having been more than momentary. And in point of fact all that we can clearly discern is substantial opposition between north and south in Palestine, just as between Highlands and Lowlands in Scotland. Only, in the Holy Land it was the north that was comparatively fertile, wealthy, and progressive. The barren Judean hills, lying rather apart from the main highway of nations, formed a natural rampart for clans made and kept specially warlike by their environment. Hence the leading part played so often by Judah in the nation's affairs from the time of David (who seems to have wrested the city of Jerusalem from the Jebusites) until the hour of that "split" which has become the most famous in history. As agriculture intensified in Palestine it would tend to abate the tribal strife upon the principles already urged,<sup>1</sup> just as the Lowland Scots were welded together earlier than the Highlanders. Then, however, the rude republicanism of the more pastoral conditions would give way to the monarchy for two concurrent motives—the ambition of individuals to be supreme, and the need felt by the communities to prevail against adversaries through the "unity of command" typified in a single leader. Such a leader appeared in Saul, who stood head and shoulders above the people, but was probably not so shy in donning the purple as is stated in the Book of Samuel "the seer," whose reluctance to anoint a despot for the reasons detailed<sup>2</sup> was only too thoroughly justified in the sequel. And it was about the year 1050 B.C. that the reluctant

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<sup>1</sup> See before, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Samuel viii. 10-18.

Saul was anointed by the still more reluctant Samuel as king of Israel. - At this point, therefore, we leave meantime those new-comers on the stage of history, to turn to others thronging forward from the wings.

*The Phœnicians.*—In the semi-deserts radiating from the ancient riverain civilisations, many small centres of culture were probably developing before the end of 1000 B.C. Later some of them, such as Phrygians, Lycians, Mysians, Cappadocians, Cilicians, Galatians, Lydians, and others cut a not inconspicuous part in history. But there is only one at this stage which calls for special notice, that is Phœnicia. Egypt and Mesopotamia were civilisations of the *plain*. Assyria had something of the *mountain* in its composition, though not so much as Persia, whose case falls to be considered immediately. With Phœnicia comes in an even more notable modification—that of the *sea*. Neither Egyptians, Mesopotamians, nor Persians were seafaring folk, because perhaps their lines of inter-communication required more resort to the rivers than to the sea-water, if also perhaps because the land was more inviting than the main with its greater dangers. Vast as the sea is compared with the land, the amount of human life modified by it must always be fractional compared with the continental impressiveness. We in Britain who can nearly all run down to the coast for a holiday are apt to forget that the vast majority of men live and die without having caught sight of the sea.<sup>1</sup> It may here be summarily stated that, like the mountain, the sea acts like a leaven as regards that “doughiness” to which humanity tends, especially in predominantly tillage states, what some writers have called the “agricultural calm.”<sup>2</sup> In passing it may be noted that diversity of occupations, what we call “industrialism,” in inducing greater class complexity has also a leavening, progressive effect. As some writer has remarked, “The ideal state should have a dose of mountains, a dash of sea, and a strong seasoning of crafts.” Phœnicia had all these. It is speculated that the people we call Phœnicians may have migrated from the Persian Gulf

<sup>1</sup> It is said that the bulk of the American troops who were shipped to Europe during the war had their first sight of the ocean on arriving at the various eastern seaports of the States and Canada.

<sup>2</sup> Scott Elliot, *The Romance of Savage Life*.

and gone landwards to the Mediterranean—a route followed circuitously later by the Jews. But there would be fishing villages always on the Syrian seaboard, and these most probably formed the germs of Phœnician greatness, even as did later the fishing stations in the Venetian lagoons and the villages on the sea-coast of Holland. The great evocative influences, of course, in Phœnician history must have been not only the rising tides of civilisation in Asia, but also, and more particularly, increase of the populations along the northern coasts of Africa, but especially in the lands north of the Mediterranean. Not only were the southern countries of Europe emerging from barbarism, but clearances were in all probability being effected in the hinterlands right up to the Baltic, and even in Britain which was then the very end of the world. Phœnicia was, indeed, the *oceanic* counterpart of the continental trading activities of which Mesopotamia was then the centre. In a word, the Phœnicians became the carriers of the ancient world, not through any peculiar genius, but by a geographical predestination as plain as that of Britain in modern times. The slopes of Lebanon gave them wood for their ships, though they may have gone lumbering in many other directions; the sands of the sea supplied the material for glass-making and provided coloured beads<sup>1</sup> by which they dazzled the eyes of our European forbears, even as we have similarly in our day entranced native races by African roadsteads or East Indian bays. The molluscs of the shore gave the Phœnicians the ingredients for the purple dyes which became the symbol of royalty in its most august forms, while sugar in the later ages was carried to the remotest parts of the world for its medicinal virtues. But, alas! human life was an article of greater merchandise still. The Phœnicians not only acted as transporters of slaves, but often captured barbarians on the beach by stratagem and sold them in foreign markets. Phœnicia, therefore, though it only embraced a strip of the Syrian seaboard some two hundred miles long, and varying in breadth from only a few yards to a maximum of thirty-five miles, was, in its way, the busiest

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<sup>1</sup> Homer somewhere speaks of the Phœnicians “bringing upon their black prows a thousand frivolous things.”

and most versatile hive of industry in the ancient world. The Phœnicians went to the Baltic for amber and to Cornwall for tin, while Carthaginian colonists are believed to have circumnavigated Africa in later times.<sup>1</sup> It was probably commercial necessity which prompted simplification of earlier systems of writing, and struck out an alphabet on which ours is founded, even if the Phœnicians may have pirated ideas as they kidnapped men. They were indeed a wonderful people, even as seen through the biased atmosphere of Greek narration, which is practically the only source of our knowledge. But there is nothing mystic or extraordinary about the apparition on a natural strategic point of the developing commercial world of a caste of merchants and middlemen which deftly exploited human labour and mortal desires, though many people are inclined to hold up their hands in awe at a spectacle of maritime and mercantile energy begun probably about 3000 B.C. Human daring and ingenuity had come to a head æons before that time, and, when we get hold of that fact firmly, the wonder may rather be that civilisation lagged so long in its course, and took such sinister forms in its development, cannibalism, human sacrifices, slavery, serfdom, and various other vices searing society at every turn and being only very slowly transcended, while war worsened international relations on every hand. In this imbroglio the Phœnicians appear as the earliest navigators, daring figures on the dim horizons of those far-off times, active, intelligent, inventive, successful, and versatile, but also utterly unscrupulous, great panderers to human vice as well as to those common virtues which prevent society from flying into pieces. Though kings figure obscurely in Phœnician annals, it is noticeable that their power seems to have been so limited that the petty states making up the whole were practically "republican" because of the dominant commercialism of the communities formerly insisted on. But the polity, always precarious in its narrow foothold on the borders of the great inland sea, became buffeted about in the greater imperial antagonisms developing in the Mediterranean, and completely lost its

<sup>1</sup> Much of Phœnician trade seems to have been done on the "silent" system already commented on, p. 34.

identity in the conflicts that ensued. Caste and people alike seem to have foundered utterly in the conflicting tides of energy let loose by Greek, Persian, and Roman ambitions. Thus the fall of Phœnicia conforms as much to historical law as its rise to greatness, if obscurity veils the features of both beginning and end of the first sea-power. Though in these last remarks we are anticipating our story by centuries, it may be well here thus to round off completely the dynamics specially applicable to the case of the Phœnicians, since they hardly come into the picture again, so few are the facts concerning them. Meantime let it be carefully noted that the millennium 2000 to 1000 B.C. was the great formative period of the first maritime nations.

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*The Persians.*—1. It has already been noted that the Kassite dynasty which arose in Babylonia about 1700 B.C. was founded by Elamites who came from the East. Probably they started from the Iranian plateau, later the seat of the Persian and Parthian dynasties. Though there may, in this millennium, have been no general organised government in the countries later known to us as Persia, the invasive powers of the inhabitants of these regions, thus early demonstrated, may here be taken advantage of as the occasion to fix their "place in history."

2. The word Persia is here employed to fix the rôle not merely of the Persians of history, but also of the other peoples inhabiting the Iranian plateau. There is more rainfall in Persia than in Egypt or Mesopotamia, but the country lies on the whole within the desert zone, some of the barren tracts being as hopeless and repellent as those of the Sahara, though much smaller in area. But Persia is also a mountainous country. And with mountains a new geographical factor comes within our ken. Authorities tell us that the prominences of the land are not so high as the depths of the ocean are profound, and that the abysses therefore rather than the continental elevations are to be considered the master features of the surface of the earth—to the geological eye that is, since we can see the hills but can only imagine the depths if also measure them mechanically. The mountains, however, are highly impressive features of the earth's crust, even if they are fractional compared with the

immense development of the plains.<sup>1</sup> In the eye of history they stand primarily for forces of separation, intimate differentiation, and stereotyping of culture *in situ*. Thus the Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world, make two different worlds of the countries which they divide, the infiltration through the extremely high passes being too slender to work out modifications on any considerable scale. The Caucasus too, perhaps the most clean-cut range in the world, contains an extreme ethnic diversity because of the cantonal complexity of the system.<sup>2</sup> The communities are kept separate by physical barriers, and tend to cling faster to their customs under the psychological prompting affecting all peoples alike, alteration coming by means of the few, as already indicated. Mountains therefore may be considered as ethnic reserves. The reader should note that, probably, all mountains have been peopled from the plains beneath owing, presumably, to the increase in population on the low grounds, or to the greater malignity and mass force of invading races. It is also to be noted that mountaineers,

<sup>1</sup> There is a tendency to hold that feeling for "Nature" emerged only in the time of Rousseau whose philosophy harked back to that source. And it is certain that mountains were considered more of a nuisance than things of beauty in Georgian times. Burt, who helped General Wade to make his famous roads, spoke disparagingly of the "dirty purple" of the Scottish hills. But, really, there seems to have been a feeling for Nature all along, if it was less ostentatious than in our days of mountaineering and aristocratic deer-stalking. There is abundant evidence in folk-lore, ballad, and heroic poetry of a feeling that was by no means born with Wordsworth, even if he exploited it most determinedly but not always successfully, since the result was sometimes "bathetic." Innumerable people have been attracted to their mountain homes through a feeling for Nature no less keen because it may have been inexpressible in cadenced form. In 1336 Petrarch ascended Mount Ventoux "for pleasure's sake." In A.D. 126 the Emperor Hadrian ascended a hill near Antioch to see the sun rise out of the morning mists. He did the same at Mount Etna. Lucian, too, speaks of a friend of his who went to the Atlantic to see its tides and "to hear the hissing of the sun sink in the western waves." He must have been disappointed as regards the sunset. Konrad von Gesner, the German Swiss writer (called "the German Pliny") who lived in the sixteenth century, was a mountain climber and a great lover of Nature.

<sup>2</sup> As Cowper says (*The Time-piece*):

Mountains interposed  
Make enemies of nations, who had else  
Like kindred drops been mingled into one.

There were more than half a hundred little states on the slopes of Kilimanjaro in Central Africa.



in the nature of the case, have never been conquerors. Not only was there a lack of mass cohesion due to the cantonal diversity, but, even if that had been overcome, there was a lack in numbers and *matériel* which militates against imperialism such as manifested itself among the peoples of the plains. Throughout history therefore, though the mountaineer might constantly raid the plain dwellers as Rob Roy did in the eighteenth century and as Kurds and Albanians were still doing only the other day, or engage as mercenaries like the people of Switzerland "of heroic-unheroic memory," mountaineers with all their recalcitrance and unexampled bravery have never been conquerors. Probably, however, they may be regarded as clarifiers of culture in the plains beneath. Unprogressive as hillmen may be in their eyries, their democratic type of mind, conserving a certain initiative, may work like a leaven in the social dough beneath. Thus the intellectualism of the Lowland Scot incarnates no small amount of mountain mentality. So, too, France, so richly diversified in its geographical traits, has the brightest culture on the Continent, to some extent perhaps because of the intimate mixing of Highland and Lowland in the ethnic crucibles. On the other hand Russian civilisation is dull-eyed and heavy-footed in comparison, because perhaps of the deadening uniformity of the plains, allowance of course also being made for the purposive withholding of education in Czaristic times and the like causes. In any event the political *rôle* of the mountaineer in world history is a self-evident fact, if his psychological force must remain an hypothesis.

3. Persia, it was stated, is a mountainous country. But it is essentially a tableland with very high ridges culminating in many snow-clad peaks. The bulk of the level land between these ridges is desert, unfit even for grazing. Hence the hunting *régime* was impossible on the plains, though it manifested itself in dispersed forms on the far-separated hillsides. Though there are few rivers in Persia of any size, considerable quantities of water flow from the snowy reservoirs on the mountains. Once tillage had become known by reputation (perhaps from Mesopotamia and Egypt) there would be considerable temptation to cultivate the fertile tracts at the foot of

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the Persian mountains. The experiments might often enough be interfered with by the more recalcitrant mountaineers who, however, in their dispersion could not interrupt with the massiveness of the pastoralists from the plains. Tillage therefore, radiating from the west, might slowly assert itself on every fertile "piedmont," and Iranian life become sublimated as in the riverain cultures.<sup>1</sup> But, owing to the lie of the land, instead of a certain doughiness supervening as in the more coherent river valleys westward, there would be a segregation which might be for the real benefit of the general mentality, subject always to the vivifying psychosis of the mountaineer, if also to his heavy hand in occasional raids from the heights. In any event Persia, whose ancient population might not have been greater than that of Egypt at its best (say, ten millions), asserted itself as the first great "world power" in the sense of lording it over practically all the leading communities of the world at that time, ruling from India and Bactriana to the Crimea in the north and Egypt in the south.

4. To understand this fact we must again invoke the instinctive tendency to aggressiveness on the part of all communities small and great. That is the basic conception which must always be posited. The secondary considerations seem to work out somewhat as follows. By the approach of the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, the way from the east to the west in the old world is narrowed to about 400 miles. In India and China tillage had been developing if far in arrear of the primitive desert cultures. Great as were the distances and feeble as may have been the productivity compared with our time, yet economic links must have connected the countries even in those far-off days when human cupidity had been awakened to the full, however hampered mobility may still have been. Now, it is to be noted that Persia lay in the centre of this world developing in Civilisation on either hand. Difficult as the country was to traverse it yet formed the corridor for such world movement as then existed, and was powerful accordingly. Though it

<sup>1</sup> It is historically certain that many of the village communities in Northern Persia to-day are descendants of nomadic Turanian invaders won over, with whatever reluctance, to agricultural life.

is the classical home of the "Aryan" peoples who fancy themselves nature's aristocracy, it was the meeting ground of "Turanians" and "Semites," and ethnic mixture may have had much to do with the virility and intelligence of the peoples in this essentially "temperate" country which was favourable enough to displays of energy despite sectional insalubrities. Centrality of geographical position in alliance with instinctive aggressiveness is thus a master-clue to the rôle Persia played in history from the earliest times. Doubtless the inward discords must have long militated against any considerable movement *en masse*. But, as already observed, there is no surer way of exorcising the demon of disunity than by calling in the spirit of imperialism, however maleficent the results may be. All that may be needed for such wizardry may be the appearance of men of military genius, and these have not been rare in human annals from the time probably of the Troglydites to that of "*le petit caporal*," even the negro races having had their "black Napoleons." Thus, though Persia did not become a "world power" until the time of Cyrus (559 B.C.), it seems probable, judging from the case of the Elamites, that the peoples were trying their "'prentice hand" at imperialism five centuries earlier.

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*India.*—It is supposed that between 2000 and 1000 B.C. "Aryan" tribes emigrating from Iran not only went westwards, but also east by south into India. That country had already been settled by "Dravidian" peoples, darker of skin and shorter of stature perhaps than the invaders, but, maybe, really higher in culture than the arrivals from Afghanistan. And now we are about to deal, not so much with a country, as a sub-continent.

1. Out of a world peopled by hunters we have seen how the thing we call Civilisation, incapable of institution in the torrid or frigid zones, originated in the desert regions of the temperate latitudes, not because they were deserts, but merely because they were, to begin with, the best shelters from human predaceousness. Probably tillage influences radiated at least from the old world centres and influenced men in other quarters to settled life. But it is just as likely that the agricultural spirit popped up spontaneously in many different quarters

and would not be denied in certain districts despite handicaps heavier than those of the desert regions. In any case Civilisation *did* arise in other quarters, and, in the old world, the regions that earliest asserted themselves after the desert cultures were the peninsular lands of further Asia within the scope of what is known as the monsoon.

2. It has already been remarked that the dry lands of the earth are massed mainly in the northern hemisphere. This massing of the world ridges has a pronounced effect upon the direction of the planetary winds according to the season of the year. As we all know the dry lands heat up much more quickly under solar radiation than do the seas and oceans. They, of course, cool down more quickly when the influence is withdrawn. So that if there be more mobility on land there is greater tenacity at sea. The hotter air is the lighter it becomes. It thus tends to rise when heated up by the sun and colder air rushes in to supply the place of that which ascends. In summer there is a "pole of heat" not only in North America but also in the heart of Asia. The air that rises causes an indraught from the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic on the one side and from the Indian Ocean and China Sea on the other. In winter the conditions are reversed. A "pole of cold" takes the place of the torrid centre, and winds tend to blow out from it towards the warmer rims of the continents. This annual march and counter-march of the winds is called the "Monsoon," an Arabic word meaning "seasonal." The phenomenon is less pronounced in America than in Asia, because of the latter's surpassing mass, which is actually greater than the double continent of the new world. The continents are like vast organisms expelling the winds in winter and inhaling them from the oceans, when the moisture with which they are informed descends bountifully upon the lands under the provocation of the chilling air of the mountain ridges. So certain and genial is the summer rainfall in eastern North America subject to the monsoon type of climate that the harvests have never been known to fail for lack of moisture. As much of the land was also naturally fertile the country was almost ideally fitted for tillage, as has already been remarked. But as it was unprotected against the nomad,

Civilisation never asserted itself in the Atlantic States until the whites, not without great difficulty, subdued the immemorial menace. In India the monsoon is the capital fact in the life of the peninsula. Should it fail to "burst" in sufficient degree the result may be famine upon a scale unknown in any other part of the earth.<sup>1</sup> It is the life-giver or the death-dealer as the case may be. Existence in India is thus fundamentally determined by the relation between the hot ascending currents of inner Asia and the long-drawn surface currents from the vast vat of the Indian Ocean. And, as that relation is subject to serious and inexplicable disturbance, it can be understood that the atmosphere is a pivot of hopes and fears as nowhere else in the world. In China the monsoon is rather more stable, flooding in fact being perhaps a greater danger than drought. In China, indeed, the relation of land and sea and the disposition of the surface features of the country cause exhalation and inhalation upon the greatest of scales. Warm moist winds drift far to the north bountifully watering the land, while cold but bracing blasts go far to the south in winter, reaching even the length of Shanghai. This fact probably accounts in some degree for the singular temper of the Chinaman's physique, the race being able apparently to endure great heat and equally great cold better than any other people on earth.

3. The monsoon is not here being dwelt upon because it was in any way a factor in the generation of Civilisation. Culture arises in the mind of man rather than in the winds of heaven. But the climatic *régime* is of consequence as helping to explain the *character* of the Civilisation which may be evoked. And it is of importance to note that, if the deserts gave man his start in Civilisation, the monsoon areas, once they had been won to tillage, gave culture its maximum mass-form. The populations of India and China are the greatest on earth, though their density may be excelled locally in other quarters. But relative geographical isolation is of account also as regards the emergence of culture both in China and India.

4. India is perhaps on the whole a more distinct "geographical unit" than China, which is a component

<sup>1</sup> Some rain is brought to the eastern Ghats by the winter monsoon, but the precipitation is trifling compared with the summer dividend.

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part of the Asiatic continent, while India is of pronounced peninsular form, "seamed to the central mass by a thread of hills like Italy but forming a drapery or ornament of the garment rather than part of the robe itself," as some geographer has put it. The scimitar-shaped rampart of the Himalayas, the highest mountains on earth, mark India off in more clean-cut fashion from the mass than do the hills of Western China. The coast-line of India, too, has a more "massive" form with fewer good ports than the shores of China. Thus, while China is the main *corner* of the vast Asiatic continent, India is rather a sub-continent in itself. These, however, are probably map ideas more than anything else, though it may not be unimportant to notice that India, dipping a good deal further south than China, has a more tropical climate, without the same alternating balance of hot and cold monsoons, since the Himalayas quite take the edge off the winter winds. This fact may be of considerable consequence in having elaborated different physiques for the Chinaman and the Hindu. For, while the Celestial is the "toughest customer" on earth, it is common ground that the ryot is the "weediest." It is sometimes considered that diet made all the difference in the Indian's case, and the "rice theory" has had considerable vogue in various quarters. But, since the Chinaman's diet also largely consists of rice, there seems to be something astray in the diagnosis, and more especially as barley and millet are more the staple food in India than rice, while wheat also is consumed in considerable quantities. Whatever the cause the two classic monsoon countries have reared quite disparate races.

5. In India, however, we are again faced with the fact of great race mixture. Some of the hill tribes are almost as "tough" as Chinamen, and there is a descending scale of colour and culture until we come to the Veddahs, who are voted as one of the "lowest" races on earth. In default of unquestionable pedigrees scholars are driven to classification founded upon speech which may, of course, be profoundly fallacious. And so in India we have the well-known division into "Dravidian" and "Aryan." But where, in the matter of blood, the distinctions begin and end no man can say. Leaving the ethnic problem as

insoluble, we can perhaps go more profitably upon the tack so consistently followed up till now. The monsoon, as has been indicated, is the capital fact regulating the life of India, but with more unequal poise than in China, as already noted. It is only on the inner plateaus and plains that the monsoon fails to "burst" with sufficient effect. On the eastern and western Ghats and in the lower Ganges valley the precipitation is generally sufficient to nourish, not only forest, but actual jungle. Here the subtropical conditions may generate the lassitude that is so inimical to progress as already discussed. In so far as that condition did not apply, there would be predatoriness on the part of the mountaineer or the hunter of the forest glades. Culture, therefore, might be slow to sprout in the areas of sufficient rainfall because of vegetable or human coercion in unknown prehistoric proportions. It is significant at least that in India to-day the most backward peoples are to be found in the districts in question. On the central plains, comparatively free from jungle and therefore answering more readily to the labours of the hoe, there was not only the precariousness of the rainfall to contend with, but also the predatoriness of the pastoralist who probably preceded the agriculturist in the land, and would not be displaced without a struggle of probably epic proportions. Even when he was conquered or absorbed, there was still to be considered the pastoralist outside wandering in the illimitable plains without, but lured constantly southward into the half-open gateways in the north-west that led to such rich rewards. Tillage therefore, though it lagged behind the better protected desert lands, laid efficient hold of the peninsula by the subliminal methods always subsumed in these considerations. Thereafter India, unassailable then by sea, had only to fear the predatoriness thundering through the north-west passes. And it is with the "Aryan" assault upon the "Dravidian" culture that history really begins in India, though the sources are only to be found in a turgid literature written and redacted probably long after the eras discoursed of had been passed.

6. The theory that the Aryan races originated in the Pamirs, "the roof of the world," has been given up as incredible. The Pamirs are one of the most inhospitable

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regions on the globe, which even birds avoid in their passages, and are about the least fitted to be the "cradle" of even a single people let alone of successive swarms that went forth to the conquest of India, of Persia, of Europe, and, in the end, of the whole earth. We know practically nothing about the cradle of any race, and therefore have to take the rocking period of humanity for granted as well as practically the whole savage and most of the barbaric ages of the race. What it is of importance to note now is that, on the face of the case, the Aryan invaders of India were pastoralists, stronger and more warlike in all probability than the "Dravidians" (already extremely mixed without doubt), but in all probability really more savage than the aborigines, at least of the more advanced communities among them. It may have been a case somewhat like that of the descent of the Israelites into Canaan, the Franks into France, or of the Lombards into Italy nearly two thousand years later. Since modern Aryans in the shape of quite healthy Britons find it impossible to rear families in India and the ruling stock can be kept up only by constant drafts from the west, the Vedic Aryans must have been of quite different physique if they thrived in such a trying climate. Like the Lombards they may have been really engulfed beyond rediscovery in the native population, but impressed their speech and modes of thought to no inconsiderable extent upon their predecessors as the Normans did in England. Probably an essentially mongrel race may have arisen on a greater scale than the "Eurasian," which is observable as a drop in the Indian bucket to-day. All that however must remain conjectural. But what we are safe in assuming is that the work of tillage, if interrupted by the successive Aryan invasions, not only maintained its hold upon the peninsula, but also developed throughout the ages despite inward lassitude and recalcitrance and the dreadful famines that seem to have punctuated the history of the country from time immemorial.

7. As this tillage had in India its ordinary sequelæ, only the variant forms of the manifestations fall to be noted now. Husbandry in ancient India was so much esteemed, according to Diodorus (who wrote about the year A.D. 1), that the tiller could without danger go on



with his work in the neighbourhood of armies drawn up for battle. "The warriors slay each other, but do no harm to the husbandmen whom they look upon as their common benefactors; they never set fire to their enemies' fields nor do they cut down any of the trees." Considering what was done in Europe in 1914-1918 our continent does not compare well with the India of two thousand years ago. Part of the German campaign at the beginning of the war was to destroy the enemy crops, while trees were not only deliberately shot to pieces but also cut down or barked in the first retreat to the Hindenburg line. If mechanism has advanced morality has rather regressed from this point of view.

8. In India even to-day there are isolated communities which manifest the "republicanism" of primitive peoples. Slavery seems to have been at one time in force, ministered to by militarism, apparently enough, but was early superseded, not only perhaps because of a certain extension of sympathy, but also because it was perceived to be "uneconomical" taken in relation to the caste system of which India is the *locus classicus*. There are said to be four main castes in Hindustan: The Brahmans or priests, the Kshattriyas or warriors, the Vaisyas or husbandmen, and the Sudras or servile classes in general. The priestly class was fabled to have emerged from the brain of Bramah, and the other three groups from inferior parts of his body. There seem however to be many subdivisions of caste, and the system is by no means symmetrical in appearance. The divisions are not superposed one upon another like the skins of an onion, but dip, clash, combine, and interpenetrate rather as do the strata of geology. So far from breaking down the bewildering system, invasions have rather added to its complexity, all conquerors down to the British having simply been moulded into a new sect in the midst of the old cast-iron categories. The system invades even the animal kingdom; the cow, partly because of its economic value, is sacred as with the Dinkas of the Nile. To them the animal is the great binding oath, and they erect hospitals for the kine though they leave their own kind to die in the ditch. In India the tree-climbing rat is of high caste, the crow low, and so on throughout the

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entire zoological area. Caste, in short, is the capital fact as regards Indian society from Vedic down to British times.

9. In judging of the origin and significance of this social portent it has to be borne in mind that caste is not in the least peculiar to India.<sup>1</sup> There is a general tendency in communities to take this as a broad line away from savagery. Caste indeed in its magistral forms is a concomitant of Civilisation. All that requires to be asked then in the case of India is, why did custom manifest itself there at once with such particular massiveness and intensity? Taking the specialty as a fact there seems no clear answer to the question. An answer to the riddle has been suggested in "climate," especially the monsoon character of the influence. This seems to be *trop simpliste*, as the French say. China, with its regular monsoons, transcended caste in unexampled fashion, as we shall see later, in making career open to talent, even if in inefficient enough fashion. The Chinese also, although manifesting much popular superstition, are remarkable for the sobriety of their general intellectualism, their theology and morality being simple and positive in their formal statements, and their literature in general quite "pedestrian" in character. The Hindus on the other hand are perfectly delirious in their mythology, elusive in their ethics (which take far more account of ritualism than of conduct as between man and man), and exaggerate to the bounds of sanity in their poetry which is the most monstrous in imagery and the heaviest in pounds avoirdupois that the world has ever known. The "Mahabharatta" is the longest poem in the world; it has 240,000 verses and is greater than all other heroic poems combined, the "Iliad" being only a pocket-book in comparison.<sup>2</sup> Baulked for explanations

<sup>1</sup> Thus we read of the Ibos of West Africa: "The social castes are strictly upheld, although anyone may pass upward by right of purchase. The highest nobility comprises only a few members, whose greatness is proclaimed to the public by tinkling bells attached to their legs or borne in front of them. Others of lesser rank are announced from afar by horn-blowing; but all may be easily recognised by their tattoo markings. Some have the skin of the forehead brought down like a sort of visor over the eyes" (Reclus, *Universal Geography*).

<sup>2</sup> It may be remarked in passing that if India lacked in sobriety of thought and revelled in rolling torrents of verbiage, it yet was the first of all the primary civilisations to manifest all the different *forms* of literature—odes, epics, dramas, &c. The difference between Hindu and

in climate or rice theories, one naturally would resort to the idea of "race," and conclude that the "Turanian" is as stodgy in his ideas as the "Aryan" is imaginative. But at once we are hauled up by the consideration that there are Aryans and Aryans just as there are faggots and faggots in the French proverb. If the mythology of the Greeks is vividly imaginative it is so in a graceful way, as indicated in the note to this section. So gracefulness is the characteristic of the deities who make love and quarrel in a fashion that makes them extremely interesting—real, living and breathing creations we feel and not abstractions like the Chinese conception. And this, we say, is "Aryan." What, then, of the deities of the Romans who also were "Aryans" *pur-sang*? Sir G. W. Cox ("Mythology of the Aryan Nations") says: "For the Latins their Gods . . . remained mysterious beings without forms, feelings, or passions, and they influenced human affairs without sharing or having any sympathy with human hopes, fears, or joys. Neither had they, like the Greek deities, any society among themselves. There was for them no Olympus where they might gather and take counsel with the father of Gods and men. They had no parentage, no marriage, no offspring. They thus became a mere multitude of oppressive beings living beyond the circle of human interests, yet constantly interfering with it, and their worship was thus as terrible a bondage as any under which the world has suffered. Not being associated with any definite bodily shapes, they could not, like the beautiful creations of the Greek mind, promote the growth of the highest art of the sculptor, the painter,

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Greek methods may be brought out by a brief comparison between the *Ramayana* and the *Iliad*. Both poems have for theme the abduction of a woman and her martial redemption. The deities of Homer, however, are but slightly exaggerated men and women, and, if they do interfere with the action of the somewhat garrulous warriors, the general movement of the poem is on a natural plane compared with the grotesque supernaturalness of the Hindu epic. The town of Lanka, unlike Troy, is a magic city inhabited by evil genii, and it is attacked by Rama assisted by an army of apes. The combatants at every movement strike magic blows instead of the quite secular hits by bronze weapons on the windy plains of Troy, and at the siege of Lanka, tops of mountains with their forests and grazing elephants are hurled at the enemy with all the power of Milton's Satan—in a word, the marvels of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are tolerable, but those of the *Ramayana* "beyond all whooping." And yet Greeks and Hindus are alike "Aryans."

and the poet." Can it be then that, the further west we come, the less imaginative the Aryans grow? By no means! Just think of Baron Munchausen. Think also of Rabelais, who wrote what may be called the Ramayana of the Renaissance. But place beside him the severe, cold, formal figure of Calvin, the Puritan of Puritans. And yet Rabelais and Calvin were "Aryan Celts," and contemporaries also who quarrelled violently just because of the utter irreconcilability of their racial gifts. Verily the ethnical clue is no more apparent than the climatic. We are in a historical *cul de sac*. That, however, is only a misfortune if we insist upon running our head into a noose.

10. The problem in hand becomes all the more perplexing when we consider that, if India is the land of rigidity and turgidity, so to say, it yet attempted to supply its own great corrective. The coast-line of India tends to be massive, frowning, surf-beaten, and has few good natural ports. Probably the internal attractiveness of the land was sufficient in itself to withhold the Hindus from becoming navigators. The difficulty of the shore line however might help, though Arabs under equally unfavourable conditions took readily to the water, but in their case, of course, the land was specially forlorn though not in their own eyes. In any case it was Phœnicians and Arabs on the one hand, and Malays on the other who traded to India, swopping their special riches for those of the peninsula whose greenery seemed so marvellous in Semitic eyes habituated to the tawny desolation of their deserts. For, though the usual stranglehold was attempted upon trade in India, commerce came to be of vast enough consequence in the life of the peninsula, the movement doubtless being helped by the great waterways. As already indicated, no better solvent of indurated custom can be found than in the clash of ideas from the outside. Whether or not these had weight in ancient India, we cannot say. But a Protestant did arrive in the person of Buddha. His figure has become encrusted with myth, and his doctrine enmeshed in doubt. But, so far as we can judge, his appearance typified a revolt against the conception of reincarnation—the capital fact in Hindu religion. The individual dies but to be born

again in some higher or lower form according to the deeds done in the body, the cycle of existence repeating itself endlessly. It is said that Buddhism rose and developed as a protest against reincarnation and that "Nirvana" is but the "Everlasting No!" to the "Everlasting Yea!" of Brahmanism which will admit any god whatever to its pantheon. Better absolute annihilation than such a spiral immortality! Such, according to great authorities, seems to have been the prime motive of the Buddha, whose creed, however, appears to have carried with it a protest against the caste system, for all religious movements seem to have their mundane implications. Even "Christian Science" concerns itself with the present as well as the future, and is as much a protest against drugs as an appeal in favour of Deity.<sup>1</sup> But it should be noted that scholars are at a loss to say what "Nirvana" really means. Indeed, as in the case of Christianity, it is difficult, if not indeed impossible, to determine the actual conditions under which Buddhism arose, and what alone were its "original" doctrines. Primitive Buddhism is as difficult to "isolate" as primitive Christianity. It is notable that, while both religions flourished for a time in the country of their origin, we shall see that they both practically disappeared from it, but went conquering in other directions—Buddhism to the East, and Christianity in the West, while Mohammedanism later pierced like an enormous wedge between them. It is now being said that Buddhism was not persecuted in India as was formerly believed, but was simply absorbed or overlaid by Brahmanic art; while the cult suffered modification in every different *milieu* where it rested. In any event, as against the tangled and matted growth of Brahman fancy it stands out (ill-defined as it may remain) with the simplicity and rigour of the desert itself. And the case of Buddha should cast doubt upon the theory that only deserts can give rise to simplicity and unity in religious conception. Egyptians, Mesopotamians, and others in their deserts were almost as monstrous in their myth-mongering conceptions as jungle-flanked Hindus. It

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<sup>1</sup> The Communism of early Christianity was equally a protest against the abuses of property which then prevailed, but it was not long persisted in apparently.

was in the very heart of the unmitigated desert, according to the Bible, that Israel idolatrously erected the golden calf which affronted the oneness of Jehovah while the prophet parleyed with Him amidst the thunders of Sinai. And the Arabs, the truest children of the desert, were not only uncompromising polytheists down to Mohammed's time, but, according to some authorities, have never really given up their fetichism, and still adore, fear or abuse the powers of the air as if Mohammed had never voiced his veto. And, long before the time of Mohammed, Buddha protested in a unifying sense with asceticism instead of sensuousness as the lure of conduct. *Encore un cul-de-sac!* From what has been said the writer would be only too well pleased to find some explanation in considerations of climate, diet, or the like. But he has always found himself baffled in this particular connection, and asks the reader to do as he does—keep an open mind where no single theory or combination of ideas will supply the positive explanation that may be in demand.

11. Indian mentality therefore, if defining itself as broadly distinct from that of other cultures, is difficult to explain. But still we may frame our mental picture on positive enough lines. Out of the once universal savagery of the peninsula the spirit of tillage emerged, subjugating probably first of all the open and less jungly plains. For ages race must have warred with race and system with system within the pear-shaped continent itself, malignity everlastingly marring the march of sympathy, which yet made headway not only against predatoriness within, but also the still greater rapacity from without. The progress was probably largely in terms of those peaceful emulations that constantly operate in society in the midst of open breaches of the peace. The stratification that ensued in Indian society was not in the least peculiar to the peninsula, even if the caste system was more complicated and rigid than almost anywhere else, sacerdotalism asserting itself almost to the dwarfing of the secular in almost every relation of life. That that was not due to the subtropical character of the climate with its fierce vegetational power is evident by the fact that, among a "Turanian" race on the other side of the

Himalayas, in bare, windy, and barren Thibet, sacerdotalism had almost equal power if a less monstrous mythology. In India, however, progress cannot always have been banned, and we shall see Buddhism coming in as one of the greatest challenges in the history of humanity. But it will also be found that nothing availed to supplant the allied despotism of priest and king, or lever the people out of the superstitions of which, indeed, the common people are the greatest conservators. About 1000 B.C. it is believed the Brahmans had attained to a supremacy over the nobility more marked than in any other case.

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*China.*—1. It is believed that, about 1020 B.C., the “Chow Dynasty” was founded in China. It is supposed to have lasted for nine hundred years. So the case of the monsoon lands of the furthest east now fall to be treated of in the same fashion as those of southern Asia. And again we are dealing with a sub-continent rather than a country. There is a marked distinction between north and south China. The north is the district of the “loess”<sup>1</sup> or yellow lands whose fertility is proverbial. Though there are mountains in the north, the country has a plain-like aspect compared with the south, whose hills, however, are still “negotiable” with the aid of the magnificent waterways of the Yang-tse-Kiang, whose volume is greater than that of the Yellow River, and therefore more serviceable to commerce. The Yellow River, however, which tends to rise above the plain by the deposition of its silt, causes inundations which are the most terrible known. A whole army of men is constantly employed to provide against the bursting of the river’s self-erected banks. The mountains of south China run back into the high ramparts of eastern Thibet and northern India—an intricate and formidable hill-system containing much highland recalcitrance, which yet was incapable of cohesion and mass-assault down stream into the wealthier lowlands beneath. China, therefore, was protected in that quarter from any nomadic interference outside her own borders. In the north the case was different. The plains there open out into the deserts

<sup>1</sup> The “loess” is supposed to be dust which has drifted from the inner deserts throughout the geological ages. As already noted it is so rich in fertilising ingredients as never to require manuring.

and grasslands of inner Asia which nourished nomadism on scales more vast and intractable than any known to history. It was in this region that the great wall was built expressly to keep out the pastoralists. Probably it served that purpose fairly well during long enough periods after its erection, though it proved unavailing against the Mongolian and Tatar invasions so well known to history. Less desolation seems to have been wrought in China than in western Asia and eastern Europe by these marauders. This was probably due to the fact that, while entry into China was comparatively easy from the north, the country, in the wet season especially, was particularly difficult for horsemen, while the denser masses of the population must have formed a greater wall of resistance, however passive, than existed in the opener, drier, and less densely-peopled Eurasian plains. Heavy, therefore, as may have been the yoke laid upon China within historical times, it seems to have been, on the whole, less coercive and destructive than that in the west, as we shall see later. China, therefore, had protection due to nature and art which, if less great than in the deserts, was still considerable, once inward predatoriness had been sufficiently overcome.

2. That China apparently lingered in the rear of Egypt and Mesopotamia in the assertion of tillage culture was probably due to the immensely greater mass of native recalcitrance included within the borders of that fairly well-defined geographical unit made by the lie of the land, the compass of the rivers, and the sweep of the monsoons. In the comparatively level north, with its greater cold and less rainfall, vegetation may never have been a great natural obstacle to tillage. But all attempts at cultivation were liable to disturbance from Mongolia, and it may have taken long enough to establish results that gave a general momentum to Civilisation and preserved it from substantial arrest thereafter, if not from occasional disturbance. It is quite conceivable, however, that the north, despite its peculiar susceptibility to extraneous trouble, may have been the real inventor and distributor of culture. For the soil and climate really lent themselves better to tillage than the more mountainous and better watered south, which nourished vegetation on a greater scale and stimulated human energy less. *A priori*, there-



fore, the cultural impulses should have originated north and pushed south, slowly overcoming the recalcitrance of forest dweller and highlander.

3. It is significant that the Chinese traditions are strictly in line with this deduction upon the bases of geography and psychology here constantly subsumed. The story goes that the Chinese originally entered the country in the north as a "Hundred Families," pushed down the valley of the Yellow River, and spread throughout the basin of the Yang-tse in a campaign of slow civilisation which displaced or absorbed the native barbarism, however much modification may have been wrought in the process. For, once again, we are face to face with ethnic varieties inscrutable in their origins and unfathomable as regards any fixed psychosis. We Europeans are apt to think that all Chinamen are alike. We could not make a greater mistake. Physically there are as great extremes between Chinamen as between northern and southern Europeans. Linguistically an inhabitant of Pekin is as unintelligible to a Cantonese as a Swede to a Spaniard, though, happily, nearly all Chinamen can write signs that are intelligible to the mind though without phonetic counterpart. Physically the differences are just as great, and so the typical Chinaman is a figment of the imagination. That remains true, though a certain general resemblance in colour, costume, and habit may distinguish Chinamen as a whole from Europeans in the mass. It may profit us to pursue these differentiations as far as they will go, but let the caution again be offered against false homogeneities, and more particularly against chosen traits being considered as either exclusive, hereditary, or immutable.

4. As in the other cases discussed, ethnic variety in alliance with geographic diversity evoking cultural emulations were probably seminal influences in shaping Chinese civilisation. For, once more, we are confronting a state of things implying really grand inventiveness in the past, despite the apparent "stagnation" in the present, China, indeed, being the chief instance which has set up the dogma of the "unprogressiveness of Asia." Relative stagnation there may be to-day. But it is perhaps more apparent than real, and it is certainly due more to

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*conditions* than to congenital racial infirmity which, forbidding progress as regards the future, would equally have rendered it impossible in the past. Absolute stagnation can be alleged of no people that has become civilised, even if it be true that progress after a certain point may become extremely slow. But China would have changed even of her own motives as she must once have done, and as all the cloistered cultures apparently did. She will change all the more readily under the world impacts of to-day which stirred Japan to quite electrical activity, and have influenced China only in less degree because of the immensely greater mass to be affected. China is visibly moving in her sleep, and may awaken like a giant refreshed, but, it is to be hoped, not to abuse her strength as a giant.

5. As regards the past at any rate there need be no dispute as to China's marked originality. For many centuries she has been the greatest agricultural power in the world, and remains so although she still depends far more upon the spade than the plough. The country is one vast garden with terrace culture carried to the very top of the hills. China has also been great in industry and art from time immemorial. About one-third of the population of 400 millions or thereabouts is engaged in non-industrial pursuits—that is to say, more “hands” than the total population of European Russia or the United States. China seems to have not only invented silk-weaving, high-grade pottery, the cultivation of the tea-plant, and the manufacture of paper, but she also discovered the compass, the art of printing, and the use of gunpowder as an explosive if not as a projectile force. It is said that some of her *savants* seem to have been aware of the circulation of blood, while the country may have been the first to erect and maintain charitable institutions. That is not a bad record for a people generally dubbed as “imitative” merely and unprogressive. And that is not all. Feudalism was apparently prevalent in the history of the country in its earlier effervescent times. But the slope of the hills, the run of the rivers, and the centripetal influences that war in the mind of man with the centrifugal forces, predestined the country to centralisation upon one of the greatest of

scales.<sup>1</sup> And that was reached in the usual despotic fashion with confusion of the secular and sacred in the inevitable compromising fashion, but with caste all too apparent in the structure.<sup>2</sup> But China showed her originality even in the art of government, which is the most difficult of all arts. But as this highly enlightened development emerged as Europe was settling into the darkness of Mediævalism, its consideration had better be postponed to its proper chronological place.

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*Japan.*—1. Just as there were small semi-desert cultures clustering round Egypt and Mesopotamia, so round the monsoon civilisations before 1000 B.C. there may have been many little marginal civilisations in Indo-China and Malaysia. The Malays indeed were the Phœnicians of the east and apparently made even longer hauls than the Semitic mariners, their oceanic elbow-room giving them greater scope than the coasts of the Mediterranean and Red Sea. But we must pass by such instances meantime, to take account of the only considerable monsoon culture left. That is Japan. For, though Korea (whose geographical articulation is very like that of Italy) might be included in the classification, it had little that was distinctive in its life, being pretty much the intellectual and political dependency of China and Japan, and latterly coming entirely under the suzerainty of the chrysanthemum kingdom. With Japan, however, we come into touch with a new kind of geographical control. Egypt and Mesopotamia were civilisations of the *plain*; Persia was a culture of the *plateau* and the *mountain*, as we shall find Mexico and Peru also to be; Phœnicia, though more solidly based on agriculture than is generally supposed, was still essentially a *maritime* power with a continental base; while Malaysia was almost an island. With Japan we come to a conception of a great and *purely island area* within the essentially temperate zone. Britain

<sup>1</sup> The older capitals of China were near the centre of the kingdom. The shift to Peking (an "eccentric" position from the administrative point of view) was due to the north being the danger point as regards foreign affairs. See before, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> In modern times caste feeling was manifested in physical forms that seem to us quite perverted. The long nails of the Mandarins and the artificial small feet of the upper-class women were open signs that the afflicted parties were not condemned to work like common folk.

is practically the only comparable case, though New Zealand, of course, may come closely enough into the comparison. But it does not flank great land masses like the two empires in question, which have been influenced tremendously by the near radiations from the continent, and have reacted powerfully in return upon the mainland cultures. New Zealand, indeed, is the most "oceanic" of great islands, but in these days of steam and electrical communication it may matter but little that she is placed so "far amid the melancholy main."

2. Japan (even excluding Sakhalin and Formosa) has an area larger than Great Britain (some 34,000 square miles of an excess) and is more "articulated" in every way, having more and higher mountains, more islands, and, on the whole, a more indented coast-line. Britain, however, has greater mineral resources but a less agricultural output, though possessing a greater area of cultivable soil—only about 15 per cent. of the total superficies of Japan being productive owing to its mountainous character. Japan lies in practically the same latitude as Italy, but dips more to the south, the tip of the southernmost main island being practically in line with the mouth of the Nile in Egypt. The country has therefore a more tropical aspect than Italy, which has its rains mainly in the winter time, while Japan has rain nearly all the year round. In the north, however, the Japanese climate is subarctic in its intensity, in consequence of the proximity to the Asiatic "pole of cold" before referred to. As in the case of the Chinese, the winter winds may have had a bracing effect upon the physique of the Japanese, nature giving them wiriness if it denied them height.

3. As in the case of every considerable culture known to history the inhabitants of Japan represent inextricably mixed stocks. Though the Mongolian type, so called, predominates, there are Malay and other unknown strains, and, as a probable basis, the mysterious Ainu whose heads and countenances show such a remarkable resemblance to the Russian mujiks. This prehistoric blending probably stood originally for much violence and no inconsiderable degradation of such cultures as may

have sprouted in this really incomparable island empire, for its natural beauties are *sui generis*. But the ultimate result may have been highly beneficial since progress is so richly by way of not too disparate culture contacts, as already observed. Probably Japan never had any such considerable land fauna as would long perpetuate the hunting *régime* in opposition to the vegetarian life for which the country is so naturally fitted, and which has made it and China from time immemorial the greatest gardens of the world. In Japan's case, however, a really new factor comes into play. Her seas are more prolific in fish than any others that we know. Now, the pelagic life may consist perfectly well with the crassest savagery, and primitive men, once they had become carnivorous, may have scouted along all the shores of the world for their rich natural bounty before they settled solidly in the interiors with their fiercer fauna on the lonesome prairies and in the darksome virgin forests. Fishermen, too, may take with great readiness to piracy, the equivalent at sea of the nomads' predatoriness on land. But, after all, the fisherman's life must, in the nature of the case, be much less nomadic than that of the wandering tribes on the land. To pursue fish on any considerable scale requires the use of boats, which imply settled points of construction and harbours for shelter and repairs, and for consumption and marketing of spoil, when things may have got that length. While the sea may be common to all adventurers, the beach would thus tend to be pre-empted in virtue of the natural law that prescribes domains for animals as well as for men. In other words, fixity would be readily enough imposed upon a fishing community by the general conditions. Fixing itself upon the shore with its outlook wholly seaward, it would have little or no temptation to spoliation within, but rather to trade in swopping the spoils of the deep for the products of the interior needed to round off a life however simple. Organised fishing would thus tend to supplement inclinations to settlement upon the land, whose peacefulness would enrich the toilers of the deep, but whose predatoriness would impoverish them. Thus, within the confines of any given country, tillers and fishers have tended to co-operation rather than to discord, however much the

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crafts might hold aloof from each other. That remains true though fishermen, as already indicated, might readily resort to piracy, or even wrecking against the shipping of their own nationals, and also, when circumstances allowed, to a smuggling which had the sneaking sympathy of nearly the whole community whose avidity made them abettors in the offence. Thus, while Phœnician civilisation began quite apparently with fishing villages and pelagic pursuits may have tended to fixity in Indo-China, Malaysia, and even China itself, Japan, with the inimitable "finny droves" of the seas, must have been ringed round with influences making for civilisation in the manner indicated, as soon as things really had got a start upon tillage lines. Fishing, therefore, may have been as much at the root of national settled expansion in Japan as it apparently was in all the ancient maritime cultures, but most conspicuously so in later cases like that of Venice, and still more clearly in that of Holland "which was founded upon herrings."

4. In any event Japan attained to Civilisation with whatever difficulties and divagations, probably through inward promptings but also, quite clearly, by radiations from China, the great tutor of the furthest east. But it lay in the nature of the case that Japan, in borrowing, would largely modify upon the examples that were set. With highly tempered human material of her own, and the psychosis of the fisherman added to that of the mountaineer, she would elaborate as well as copy, and thus her culture became distinctive rather than slavish, with a "bouquet" in her artistry that was all her own and that captivated the tastes of the west after the opening of her ports in the nineteenth century. Despite the prevalence of popular superstition too, there has proved to be a certain positiveness of mind about the Japanese similar to the Chinaman's attitude to religion, a certain freedom from priestcraft which would almost tempt one to believe that this is a distinct "Mongol" trait were it not that the purest Mongols of the continental interior are as abject in their attitude as it is possible to be. The positiveness is there at any rate. As one Frenchman puts it: "*Le temps de faire trois courbettes accompagnées d'un claquement de doigts pour appeler l'attention de*

la divinité, et notre homme passe à d'autres exercices." <sup>1</sup> Considering the speculation that has been employed to account for Hindu mentality because of the "terrifying" aspects of nature in the peninsula, it is noteworthy that if any people could be terrorised into religion it should be the Japanese. Their country is set upon one of the most unsettled, tremulous areas of the earth's crust. Not only is there much volcanic action, but earthquakes are an everyday occurrence. Hence the Japanese should be devotees almost *in excelsis*. And yet they are one of the least religious races. It will not do to say that, fearful as the natural phenomena are, the people get so used to them that familiarity breeds contempt. For the same thing should apply to the Hindus. Neither is it convincing to say that the light structure of the Japanese houses avoids much of the destruction which the earthquakes would otherwise create. There is simply no getting used to a surface that is continually rocking like a cradle, and may suddenly yawn open over great distances, swallowing everything up in the line of the fissure, and twisting the countryside about as if it were old iron. The people get killed in considerable numbers despite the deliberate flimsiness of the dwellings,<sup>2</sup> and the terror (at once so real, so impalpable and so gigantically impersonal) has maximum scope for its mental impressiveness. But, in Japan, positiveness confronts terror, and the line of its evolution seems to be another of those problems insoluble in terms of "environment" in any analytic way.

5. Consanguineous as became the cultures of China and Japan upon the lines indicated, they nevertheless diverged at many points. And the reader should take note of one great line of demarcation quite obviously due to the different geographical *milieux*. It has already been observed that the form of Society broadly known as "Feudalism" occurred generally, if not inevitably, on

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<sup>1</sup> *Les Principales Puissances du Monde*, Fallex et Mairey, p. 480 (free translation): "Mr. Jap bows thrice, calls the attention of the divinity by clicking his fingers, and immediately passes on to the work of the day."

<sup>2</sup> It does not seem to have struck the theorists upon this line that, because of the general poverty in monsoon lands, by far the greater number of houses are light and ramshackle and would stand earthquake shock almost as well as the Japanese.

the way to the complete centralisation in which tillage eventuates. It was noted also that the Feudalistic condition might recur if the centralisation were disturbed for whatever cause. In Byzantium such Feudalism re-appeared, though but transitorily, while it developed to the fullest possible extent in the much more disrupted western section of the once full-orbed Roman Empire. China passed through her Feudalistic period, though she cannot be said to have clearly reverted to it in the revolutions she suffered after the first consolidation, so strong apparently were the natural forces of centralisation within the Celestial Empire. Japan however, as we shall see, halted in her evolution at a stage which was not only Feudalistic (despite the fact of a monarchy theoretically absolute), but had also extraordinary stability in its manifestations. We have seen how, in the tendency towards specialisation of function which all societies manifest from their embryonic stages, there might be much confusion and antagonism between the forces typified respectively as secular and sacred, although the two influences—contradictory in their absolutist assertions—might instinctively co-operate when any challenge came from subversive quarters beneath themselves, though at times nobles and lower orders were purposely manipulated in the interest of the monarch and church as the case might be. In some primitive societies still the wizard or sorcerer is not differentiated from the king, while in other societies there are *two* kings representing a balance of ancient forces whose differentia had somehow been co-ordinated. Even the comparatively advanced community of Sparta once had its double kingship. In many cases the various evolutions might be traceable to positive if changing geographical controls, but, in the bulk of the instances, only the Topsy-like conclusion can now be pronounced—"Specks it grewed!" In Japan till the middle of the nineteenth century there not only were two authorities recognised as ultimate if perfectly co-ordinate (the Mikado and the Shogun), but also a feudatory allegiance was given to the more shadowy as well as the more substantial head. In other words Japan, compared with China, will be found to be an interesting case of arrested development. And the



geographical articulation had apparently a determining, if not an absolute, influence upon the particular social stratification. For, in highly mountainous and dislocated Japan the local lords could all the better maintain their communal authority, especially in the face of a bi-cameral despotism kept going by the force of custom to some extent, but also kept balanced by the nobility for their own ends. On a much smaller scale it was the trouble of Pope, Emperor, King, and Noble in mediæval Europe, with the identical balancing and disruption of forces within the charmed circle of authority, which lasted in Japan because of popular unassertiveness as in Europe. When the French Revolution gave nationality a completely sharp edge and democratic sloth a shog, the *coup de grâce* was given to the European simulacrum which had been going on by traditional momentum almost wholly. In Japan the Feudalism might have been persisted in to all eternity in consequence of the really self-contained character of the island Empire.<sup>1</sup> It is true that there was a recalcitrant *intelligenza* within, even as there was in ancient Egypt, but it might never have had the power to force new orientations by itself against official moribundity and popular conservatism. But new ideas had been creeping into the country through the innumerable creeks of the island Empire. An inward preparation had thus preceded the irruption of Commodore Perry, whose advent was portentous more for what it symbolised than for what it really could have effected with the small forces he commanded.<sup>2</sup> He gave the signal for a revolution starting from above which, on that account, had ever so much more chance of succeeding than if it had been

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<sup>1</sup> Feudalism still persists in Abyssinia because her territory (about as disjointed as that of Japan and even more massive) cannot be so easily penetrated as that of the island Empire, and is hemmed in by savagery worse than its own. It was the consciousness of self-sufficiency which seemingly caused Japan in the sixteenth century to recoil upon herself and try to keep completely unspotted from the world. Korea tried the same thing, so did Thibet in our time, and so did other powers as far back as ancient Egypt. National conceit may thus take the road of splendid isolation or sordid imperialism according to the inscrutable moods of the hour.

<sup>2</sup> It has also to be noted that the Russians were expanding in eastern Asia, and had not only laid hold of Sakhalin, but were also pressing upon Yezo. The Japanese were thus roused to the fact that they might save themselves by a counter offensive instead of by isolation, and so the progressive party won the day, founding upon the aggressive instinct.

merely an ebullition of the people so helpless in their disorganisation though great in numbers.<sup>1</sup> But Japan has become modernised mainly on the mechanical side of things. Her old ingrained militarism indeed, so different from the studied pacifism we find in China, became as fly-blown as the worst European example, and (exploiting the popular spirit of aggression that it is ever so much more easy to raise than to lay) she has conceived her future mainly by way of territories to annex and markets to "capture." We all know what is meant by a "Chinese copy" of anything, namely, an absolutely slavish imitation of an article with all the marks repeated, even if they be flaws or faults. China certainly has shown no disposition so to copy European civilisation. But certainly Japan has, but she tends to accentuate our vices rather than our virtues. And Militarism is the worst demon that she has called to her councils. If that spirit is not laid by the present general attempt at exorcism, then the yellow man and the white may yet be locked in struggles too horrible to dream of. It might therefore have been better that Japan should never have given the lie to the dogma of the "unprogressiveness of Asia" (never more than a half-truth) than that her advent on the stage of world politics should only complicate things upon vicious lines. But perhaps Japan may suffer the sublimation all the world may now be undergoing, and her arrival may have hastened rather than retarded crystallisations in the crucibles of peace, even as the adding of one ingredient may bring out all the precipitates required in a chemical process. Japanese courage and efficiency are to-day quite up to the European standards, but it will be a bad day for Civilisation if she is to dye the fabric redder than ever with the blood of men instead of adorning it with the new artistries which her genius (more mobile than that of her Asiatic congeners) can so readily supply. Largely anticipatory as many of these considerations are it may be well to exhaust here the dynamic ideas that specially apply to the island kingdom of the east, which so long preceded that of the west on the stage of history.

<sup>1</sup> The failures of Cade's and Tyler's rebellions, the peasant risings in Europe, John of Leyden's resurgence, &c., are cases in point.

*The Awakening of Europe.*—1. Though Egyptian adventurers and Phœnician sailors may have touched the coast of Europe long before 2000 B.C., and Civilisation may then have been active enough in the islands and on the south-east coast-lands of Europe, it is in this millennium that the least of continents begins to play the rôle which was to give it the greatest of reputations among the peoples of the earth. The Dorian invasion, which is dated about 1100 B.C., though semi-barbaric and largely destructive, may have given tone to the cultures which began distinctly to define themselves in the next millennium which was to manifest “the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome.”<sup>1</sup>

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It has often been remarked that Europe may be considered more of a pendant or peninsula of Asia than a continent in itself, neither the Maintch depression nor the Ural Mountains, it is alleged, forming any real dividing lines in geography. Even if we took that view a comparison would still require to be made between the continent and its appendix, between the mass and its satellite. And it may be better here to keep to the time-honoured continental distinction.

2. Europe is the most “oceanic” of all the continents. Though the Caspian, Black, and Mediterranean are all inland seas, these great, and indeed incomparable, sheets of water tend to moderate both the heat and the cold of the climate, which is further enriched by the general south-west drift of the Atlantic,<sup>2</sup> even the bulges represented by

<sup>1</sup> It is almost impossible not to quote these words of Poe at some point in an historical work. Having mentioned them now, the reader’s attention may be drawn to the fact that the lines originally read :

“The beauty of fair Greece  
And the grandeur of old Rome.”

Was there ever a more striking instance of verbal transmutation from weakness into sublimity by such simple means: the dropping of two weak adjectives and the substitution of two strong nouns?

<sup>2</sup> The Gulf Stream, like its Pacific equivalent (the Kuro-Siwa or “Black Stream”), is a grand and interesting physiographical fact. But that the Gulf Stream, as a stream, is responsible for the equability of our climate is being renounced as a fallacy. The Gulf Stream flows far nearer the shores of New England than the western coasts of Old England, and yet the former are frost-bound almost throughout the winter, while the latter are not. It is not so much the Labrador current which causes this, as the polar winds blowing from the land to the sea, just as in Asia the northern island of Japan proper (Yezo) has also a very cold climate, though it is in the latitude of southern France. The Gulf Stream loses

the Baltic and the White seas enhancing the habitability of the north. Though Dumas truly enough said that "Africa begins in Spain" because of the arid tableau character of the latter country, yet the rest of the continent (saving occasional drought in Russia) is well watered. There are many fertile plains, those of Hungary, Russia, and Rumania being highly productive by nature. The rivers which run in all directions to the various seas have always tended to assist the human movement, while the mountains, though high in the Alps, the Pyrenees, and Scandinavia, have, on the whole, kept up enough segregation to neutralise the tendency to heaviness from which dwellers on undiversified plains are apt to suffer. The contrast between Russia and France is striking in this connection, the difference in versatility being due in no small degree perhaps to the different geographical controls. When mineral wealth is added to agricultural, and both to atmospheric bounty, there is no wonder that the European peoples, stimulated to the highest possible efficiency by the general environment which makes Europe the *élite* among the continents, should have become the leaders of the human race. But why, then, did the continent lag long behind the Civilisations of the east, and perhaps was not in advance of the lonely cultures of Mexico and Peru? If the considerations already advanced are sound, this last (and perhaps greatest) aspect of the historical problem presents no difficulty. On the contrary, relative backwardness in Europe is exactly what should follow from all the circumstances of the case.

3. Though Europe has yielded the greatest quantity of human remains both in skeletal and primitive artistic form, we cannot argue from that that the continent was the original home of man as some have maintained. It is as yet only the *best explored region*. As already remarked, the tropics where the *débris* of "pithecanthropus erectus" was found remain the home of the anthropoids, and, for those who take the evolutionary view of things, this supplies a good enough argument for the

itself utterly in the Atlantic, in which it is less than a drop in the bucket, and it is the south-west winds bringing up atmospheric heat and warmer water in combination which modify our climate, as happens also on the north-western coasts of America, which have a much more genial climate than Canada and the north-eastern United States.

belief that Europe was a "centre of dispersion" rather than a "centre of origins" for humanity. Here, however, we are not primarily concerned with that problem. As before stated, our point of departure is the conception of a tool-using animal spread over the whole earth, however the dispersion may have been accomplished. With that as a starting-point the question was raised, why did the progress which we call "Civilisation" take place in certain latitudes and not in others, and take lines of greater instead of least resistance in the most geographically favourable areas? It must be repeated that the answer was found in a combination of climate and human psychology. Let us now see how the combination works out with special reference to Europe.

4. Though Europe lies wholly within the temperate zone and excels in atmospheric bounty, the elegance of its forms, and the diversity of its products, heavy discounts have yet to be made from its claim to be a nursery of Civilisation in a world once wholly nomadic. Relatively genial as is the climate in the north, Scandinavia, Lapland, Finland, and northern Russia were too glaciated and unproductive to originate settled life upon the almost indispensable vegetarian basis. Northern Germany was too sandy, heathy, and otherwise handicapped, and has, over great part at least, been won to tillage only in our times. If the last ice-age occurred during the human period, it probably shifted this rigour and infertility far enough to the south, and may have interrupted tendencies to progress over the whole of northern Europe. Of that, of course, we can know nothing with certainty. In Ireland, the British Islands, and the rest of well-watered Europe, the natural difficulties would be bogs, but, more especially, forests, which, though by no means so dense as the vegetation in the tropics, would present sufficient difficulty to men provided only with tools of stone. These forests, with their interspersed grass-lands, would nourish game in such abundance as long to perpetuate the hunting *régime*. In other words, Europe, with its woodlands in the west and its plains and steppes in the east, is analogous to eastern America with its Atlantic forested slopes running into prairies in the west. This disposition of things favoured nomadism in North America even long after the time of

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the Pilgrim Fathers, as will be considered more in detail hereafter. There was only relatively more shelter in Europe, which for ages must have resembled the west in its nomadism, many of the German tribes in the time of Tacitus apparently living a life analogous to that of the noble red men of the woods and of the prairies, the perpetuation of whose nomadism into our times vividly indicates the conditions of our forefathers. The cases are practically on all fours as regards fundamentals. Let us, however, try to work out the *differentia*.

5. The condition of the North American Indians at the time of the "discovery" as well as their traditions show plainly that agriculture had been constantly attempting to establish itself in the Atlantic States (sheltered compared with the prairies), but without permanent success because of too many open doors remaining to nomadism. Even the most aggressive nations dabbled more or less in tillage. But it was maize which they cultivated. And it falls to be repeated that no grain has less fixing force in the social way. The seed is easily sown, requires practically no care in its growth, and is reaped with equal ease. The Iroquois, the most powerful of all native nations, whose name was a terror throughout the land, although their virile warriors probably never numbered more than five thousand at a time, seem to have cultivated maize in greater degree than the other tribes. It may thus be true, as Parkman suggests, that it rather ministered to their ferocity, since it could not bind them effectually to the soil. But it must be remembered that the chief hunting-grounds of the Iroquois, commanding the greater lakes and the Atlantic waterways, gave them a prime strategical advantage which made them the Prussians of their time and place. In any case it is an historical fact that neither the lure of the fishy Atlantic estuaries, nor the fertility of the soil on both sides of the Appalachians, sufficed for the purpose of inducing real Civilisations in pre-Columbian America north of Mexico. The great belt of forests which originally lined the coast nourished, of course, its own type of nomadism. Even if that local recalcitrance had been completely overcome (which is doubtful), it is questionable if the forests, cleared to the extent necessary for

tillage, could have acted as a sufficient shelter from the predatoriness of the treeless plains. For there seems always to have been infiltration by the lightly equipped Indian through the forest in every direction. In a word, the woodlands were not a sufficient transverse barrier to prevent predaciousness from the hinterland, where movement was so extremely easy as already observed because of the "simple build" of the continent, the run of the rivers, and the like. Geographical incomplecity was thus the curse of North America from the point of view of the evolution of Civilisation upon native lines, pronounced as the sectional tendencies to tillage were in the nooks and crannies of the Atlantic States.

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6. In Europe the case was somewhat different. The greatest plain in the world is that which begins on the coast of Central Europe, stretches through Germany, widens out in Poland, reaches its European maximum in Russia, is bisected rather than closed by the easily traversed Urals, enlarges to a world maximum in Siberia, dies away in the confused mountain systems that flank the northern coasts of the Pacific, and bifurcates in the southern centre into the desert of Gobi.<sup>1</sup> Where by nature the soil was suitable the plain tends to be forested within the sweep of the oceanic winds, or wherever any ridges may manage to wring sufficient moisture from the clouds. A very great part of the plain, however, is desert in consequence of the lack of rain. Other large tracts have enough precipitation to nourish grasses in considerable abundance, but are hardly fit for tillage. But not inconsiderable sections could have been brought profitably under the plough had the other conditions been favourable. In Asia the Russian mujik has been slowly winning these sections from nomadism. In Russia the rainfall is just on the margin of insufficiency, and serious famines have thus been caused at times. But Russia, with its inexhaustible fertile soil in the black earth region, is capable of a greater agricultural productivity than even the United States. It will thus be seen that the heart of Eurasia is mainly of a mixed desert and steppe-land character, the areas comprehended being very great. In some parts of this inner land that are now hopeless

<sup>1</sup> A large part of this plain in the north is infertile "tundra" land.

desert ruins of cities have been discovered, and this has given rise to the suggestion that a moister climate once prevailed in these regions, and that it was perhaps a progressive (or at least periodical) desiccation which caused all the nomadic irruptions known to history—Scythians, Huns, Bulgars, Magyars, Kipchacks, Mongols, Tatars, and what not.<sup>1</sup> This is quite probable, but must remain entirely speculative as regards the past. But, now that exact records of rainfall are being kept, it should be possible for our descendants to work out the problem of Asiatic climate with all that it has involved for humanity and may yet imply. Meantime it is important to note that, from the point of view of this study, *progressive drying up is not required in order to explain the nomadic interventions from Asia*. All that needs to be kept in mind is the imperialistic instinct of communities, and, as already observed, only an organising genius might be required to set in motion the masses of inner Asia who might be suffering less from physical than psychological thirst. It is to be feared that it was not so much drought as desire which caused Tamerlane to emulate (and perhaps even outdo) the feats of Ghenghis Khan, who conquered the greater part of Asia and the east European plains with a brutality which still makes scholars shudder in perusing the ancient records.

7. The desert and steppes of inner Asia thus correspond to the deserts and prairies of central and western North America. But, though the nomadism of the new world was less massive than that of the old, it was more coercive just because of the relative absence of geographical barriers due to the incomplex build of the new world, the transverse run of the Appalachians affording no effective protection as already observed. In Asia there was a

<sup>1</sup> Some of the cities obviously owed their existence to the tapping of water from the hills. Since there might never be any great regularity in such supplies, cities would have to be deserted by any local drying up of the sources or fouling of the ground by usage (a likely enough thing). There might thus be much shifting to and fro of communities, and so the number of sites should not be taken as representing *contemporary* cultures. How these little civilisations originated we do not know, but, since they are in the desert, they are strictly in line with the theory here held fundamentally in view, however impossible it may be to get at the secret of their origin or decease. From what has been said it is just as probable that they were overwhelmed by a recrudescence of nomadism as by an intensification of drought.



greater complexity of desert, steppe, plateau, mountain, &c. The terrible Gobi desert and the eastern mountains did protect China after a fashion, and the physical barriers and sheer density of the native populations diluted the barbarism to such an extent that, though it might disturb Civilisation, it could not destroy or utterly debase it. Once also Civilisation had got started on the plains of India the Himalayas acted as a real protection, while the great difference in climate would dilute such savagery as poured through the Afghan passes, and rob it of permanent potency just as happened to the Teutonic invaders of Italy, who seem constantly to have rolled down in conflict with the native peoples. The trouble was that India enshrined a good deal of predaciousness inside the peninsula itself, which was so difficult to centralise from within as already noted, and the blank of nearly a thousand years in its history after the time of Asoka may be due as much to some recrudescence of barbarism inside as invasion from without. But eastern Europe had no protection at all either from its local predatoriness, or from that of the dim Asiatic backgrounds. The Urals, as already noted, were absolutely no barrier to the latitudinal flow of population. Perhaps, indeed, they rather facilitated movement in dragging moisture from the clouds and so increasing the herbage on either side of the hills. The Urals may thus have acted as a vast natural caravanserai for the terrible horsemen from Asia, and have given no more real protection to the inhabitants of the black-earth region than did the Alleghanies to the tribes inclined to agriculture on the Atlantic slopes of America. Moreover the Asiatics, in passing into the fertile plains of Europe, were not suffering such change of climate as in the dip southwards to India and China. Europe, indeed, was actually more "temperate" than inner Asia, but just as stimulating. The upshot was that eastern Europe, so naturally fit for tillage over immense areas, was the area in the old world most accursed by nomadism, justifying the conclusion already come to that the Russian peoples, though everlastingly tempted to exploit the fertile soil, formed a real martyr nation if ever there was one, capable only of self-assertion and expansion after the invention of gunpowder gave the

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advantage to the more civilised side as already mentioned, and as will be afterwards explained.

8. But western and southern Europe had greater protection than the hapless eastern plains. The mountains ringing round Bohemia and Hungary might not protect their plains from the covetousness of the pastoralists, but they had at least a certain deflecting power. Many invasions thus turned aside into the Balkan peninsula, whose difficulties in historical times were braved because of the glittering lure of Constantinople. In northern Europe the bogs, heaths, and general barrenness rather encouraged nomadism *in situ* than tempted the Asiatic rieviers. The hills of central Germany and the Alps with the contained virgin forests would also set up further difficulties for massed Asiatic attacks and lead to deflections north and south and dissipation of the foreign forces. In short, the elongation of western Europe with its bogs, rivers, forests, and hills constituted a long gallery of difficulties with tempting doors of exit to right and left, and acted as a protection from the nomadism of the steppes such as comparable areas of eastern America never enjoyed in their relation to the prairies. But this very diversity of central and eastern Europe, with the forests perhaps as the greatest conservators, gave the local predaciousness a chance which caused Civilisation to lag behind not only the desert cultures of the east, but also those of southern Europe, to which we now turn.

9. The capital consideration regarding southern Europe is that of climate in the comparative sense. From Asia Minor to Siberia there has always been such a mixture of races as completely to defy classification. That mixture no doubt had its influence in inducing Civilisation, because culture is so readily promoted by ethnic diversity, as already observed, if the types be not too extreme. But the reader is advised against the view which still prevails that the ancient Civilisation of southern Europe owed whatever superiority it had to a "genius" inheritable and inalienable in the races who manifested it, albeit the genius lagged for ages and disappeared seemingly for good. The Mediterranean countries possess a specific, though not a unique, climate, since it has analogies in America, Australia, and South Africa. The great sea

is within the trade wind zone, but as regards its northern shores only in the summer time. As already remarked the trade winds are drying winds. When, therefore, they shift north with the sun in our summer, southern Europe (more markedly in the east than the west) becomes an area of drought. The vegetation has thus to make shift with the rain that has been precipitated by the "anti-trade winds," as they are called, in the winter. The grasses and cereals therefore hurry through their growth and ripen quickly, while the country as a whole tends to assume a parched, dusty aspect. Though trees special to the climate flourish in considerable abundance, forests have not the density either of the tropics or the moist temperate latitudes, and probably never did have during the present geological dispensation of things. The result was that much less *clearing* of the soil to prepare the way for tillage would require to be accomplished in southern Europe than in central or western. Civilisation, therefore, should have rooted in southern Europe earlier than in any other part of the continent through the mere fact of climate alone, and in the east earlier than in the west because of the greater intensity of the characteristic weather conditions. To this has to be added the fact that the east was earlier in intimate touch with the desert and semi-desert cultures of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and Egypt. Little wonder then that, apart from all transcendental considerations as to "race," the islands and shores of the Balkan peninsula absorbed as well as refined upon culture ages before the moister and more wooded hinterlands, and also before the grassy plains of Russia whose treelessness was due to the comparative lack of rain. Europe thus presents three distinguishable climates: (1) The Mediterranean with its dry summers and wet winters made vegetation originally more manageable than on the wetter soils with their denser forests. When the local predatoriness on the northern shores of the Mediterranean had been overcome, the countries had only to fear the rapacity of the moist hinterlands and the comparatively dry steppes, and these were evils that were never quite overcome, and caused the cultures probably to lag long behind the more protected east. But the backbone of mountains

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which runs from the Black Sea practically to the Pyrenees acted as a screen which gave at least relative protection to the south, and caused it to burgeon first on the continent under the radiations from the purple east. (2) The comparatively dense forest growths in central and western Europe (outside of Spain) perpetuated predatoriness locally, causing culture to lag behind the south. But the countries, being less bedevilled by nomadism than the great eastern plains, naturally instituted culture earlier than the more purely continental lands, not only through local initiative, but also and more especially by the example as well as the pressure of the Southern civilisations. (3) The eastern plains, where the climate is of the "continental" type, though naturally fertile, yielded no shelter whatever for local tendencies to settlement except in unpropitious marshes, while the European section of the plains, as we have seen, had less protection even than China and India from the most massive predatoriness known to history—that of inner Asia. Thus the Slavonic peoples were the last to attain to completely settled life and Civilisation which ensued in most unkempt, massive, and frowsy form due to the special conditions. But the invention of gunpowder, as has been noted, set Europe absolutely in its own paths, as we shall follow more in detail hereafter. Meantime one set of principles, simple, obvious, and coherent, enables us to close the circuit of Civilisation so to say—to understand why culture began in deserts, gained massiveness in monsoon climates, but reached mobility, grace, and complete versatility only in Europe—the queen of the continents in natural endowment as we have noted, kept backward only by its natural condition in alliance with the malignities that so long determined civilised status. But the continent was not to be forever denied the pre-eminence that was its due, and we shall soon proceed briefly to scan the characteristics of its brilliant dawn.

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*Egypt.*—From this point onwards historical events become not only more and more plentiful, but also jostle each other so much that it is difficult to decide which

country has the best right to have our story and comments run out under its name. It will be the object here, however, to have as little telescoping of views as possible. It will be remembered that, about 1000 B.C., "Tanites" had displaced usurping priests in Egypt. They subsequently suppressed a rebellion by scions of the Ramesside stock, and made a member of the family high priest at Thebes with the usual monopolistic motives probably. King Solomon, that much married man, seems to have espoused a daughter of one of these Tanite kings, but whether political harmony was thereby achieved and domestic discord avoided history sayeth not. The Tanites then confronted a problem that became a terrible distraction for nearly every empire in turn. Libyan mercenaries had for some time been the backbone of the Egyptian armies. Since it is the characteristic of all power to increase, if possible, the scope of its authority, these gentry acted precisely as the Prætorians, the Mamelukes, and the Janissaries did later—made the political weather to suit their own purposes. One Libyan (Shashanq of Bubastis) actually seated himself on the Egyptian throne. Thereupon disgruntled high priests and their hangers-on went up the Nile into "Ethiopia" and founded a new kingdom at Napata. Shashanq, of course, parcelled out the vacant benefices among the members of the royal family—always numerous in those polygamous days. The royal mercenary also invaded Palestine, which was then in the throes of its memorable "split," and captured and sacked Jerusalem, no doubt gaining much loot, because Palestine seems then to have been quite prosperous.<sup>1</sup> Shashanq's children seem to have been as ambitious as their progenitor, cut out princedoms for themselves, made Pharaoh a nominal ruler, and caused Egypt to revert to something like that "Feudalism" she had sloughed thousands of years before. This gave the Napata "Ethiopians" their chance. So they campaigned down stream in the first great organised effort going with the current, and drove the "pretenders" into the delta. The Ethiopians, however, do not seem to have insisted upon that deadly uniformity that has too often been the aim of despots.

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<sup>1</sup> The rebel Jeroboam had taken refuge at Shashanq's court.

A good deal of authority seems to have been left in the "nomes" of the local princes. But now a menace greater even than mercenaries was to confront the state. Sennacherib the Assyrian king invaded Palestine (701 B.C.)—an event deeply enshrined in the popular memory still by the vigorous rhetoric of Byron's lines beginning :

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,  
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.

Whether it was pestilence or the "angel of the Lord" in a less metaphorical sense which made Sennacherib retire we cannot say, but the respite for both Palestine and Egypt was brief. Esarhaddon, about 670 B.C., had the whole country surrendered to him, and, some four years later, Thebes was sacked by Assurbanapal and "Ethiopian" rule ended. So "Feudalism" suddenly reasserted itself, there being twelve petty princes in the delta alone forming the "Dodecarchy," as it is called. Ever since the microbe of mass warfare peculiar to the human species became an influence in the blood the instinct had been always "to make a wilderness and call it peace." In these pages nomadism has been constantly reprobated as the enemy of culture, but it has been equally the effort to show that too much of the old Adam remained in the midst of even the highest Civilisations, causing them to contend blindly with each other for material wealth, whose symbols were taken for the realities and for suzerainties which (could they have been permanent, as they never proved to be) would have corrupted superior as well as vassal by the essential ignobility of the ties. But toleration is not the way of the world even yet, and, in modern times, potentates returning in triumph to their palaces have gloated over the number of their enemies slain in battle, and became ecstatic at the sight of the loot in slaves or gold that might utterly corrode the economics of the victor nation under the tinsel of success. Protest as we may to-day we have to recognise that it was thus or thus the world pursued its way. But while we can in fancy return with proud Assyrian cohorts to Nineveh, see the triumph through the streets to the temple-palaces, scent the smoke of incense curling round the altars of the gods, and imagine even the smile of the despot wantoning

among his women adorned for his return, we should try to step aside from the "brilliancy" accorded to triumphs such as these, see in imagination the wolves and vultures devouring the unburied slain, hear the wailing of the widows and fatherless by ruined hearths and desecrated altars, imagine not alone the sufferings on the vanquished side but also the inevitable reactions among the victors which only reason can follow to the end, and wonder why man alone among created species should forever have engaged in such pursuits. Transcend malignity as we may in the future, let us at least never lose sight of its terrible incidence in the past. The Assyrian triumph was the beginning of the end of Egyptian independence established thousands of years before Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldees, and vigorous for centuries after Solomon had ceased to reign in all his glory, and Israel was torn in twain. For, though Psamthek I threw off the Assyrian yoke with the aid of Carian and Ionian mercenaries,<sup>1</sup> and opened up the country to the Greeks, and Neku II<sup>2</sup> defeated the Jewish king Josiah at Megiddo, the former was himself decisively defeated in turn on the banks of the Euphrates by Nebuchadrezzar, then but the general of a nascent Babylon.<sup>3</sup> Though the flame of Egyptian independence flickered in its socket for a time the candle may be said to have been burnt out completely with the triumph of the Persians under Cyrus and his successors.

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*Mesopotamia.*—In our last comments we left Assyria and Babylon struggling with each other for suzerainty in the land between the rivers. Though Assyria had ups and downs in the 500 years now under review, its imperial fortunes reached a height in this era, to be followed by a fall more sudden than almost anything else in history. The enthroned tigers not only reduced Babylon to despair, but also campaigned eastwards towards Persia, north-

<sup>1</sup> It is said that 200,000 of Psamthek's Egyptian and Libyan soldiers deserted to Ethiopia through jealousy of these mercenaries.

<sup>2</sup> It was in the reign of Neku that the Phœnicians under his instructions are said to have circumnavigated Africa.

<sup>3</sup> The Book of Daniel makes "Nebuchadnezzar" mad for a period. "And he was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew from heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers and his nails like bird's claws." This gruesome story is not confirmed by anything that is known about "Nebuchadrezzar."

west through Asia Minor towards Europe, and up the Nile to Ethiopia as already indicated. Then when no more than the ordinary troubles inherent in empire were troubling Assyria and she was renewing an assault upon afflicted Babylonia, "Scythians" appeared in the Assyrian rear. It would almost seem as if the then Babylonian king had somehow signalled to those invaders, who destroyed Nineveh almost in a night, the last king perishing in the flames of the palace kindled, it is thought, by his royal hands. Who the "Scythians" in question were we do not know.<sup>1</sup> But probably they were the first recognisable invaders from inner Asia, which thereafter is seen to send out endless swarms seeking to waste Civilisation as locusts devour everything in their path. Why they spared Babylonia we cannot say, unless they had become glutted with loot, or cut each other to pieces over the spoils problem. In any event Babylonia was free of the "auld enemy" about 600 B.C. and did "brilliant" things under the aforementioned Nebuchadnezzar, the last great figure among the despots. Yet the Assyrian had been destroyed only to be succeeded by the Persian who was to prove a greater world conqueror still. In 538 B.C. Babylon opened its gates to Cyrus the "King of Kings." So, practically at the same moment, passed away in Egypt and Mesopotamia the most ancient polities known to man. Cradled in deserts, which alone in ancient times gave scope for the more peaceful proclivities of man, we have seen the cultures rise from the obscure toil of endless generations, whether bond or free, to wonderful power over matter within their dominions, if with less sovereign success in the realm of mind. For, while the polities stood for intensified social harmony compared with the world of nomadism outside, there was never any perfect discipline as regards the mass malignities peculiar to man. For ever the spirit of faction tended to assert itself round issues perhaps trivial beyond compare, and too often the inward turmoils were transcended only to unite the barbs against the nations without, whose wealth and independence were intolerable to the covetous eyes of kings and peoples alike, though victory often "ruined" the victims less than it debauched the con-

<sup>1</sup> They are sometimes called the "Manda."



querors. But, since the politics persisted despite all lootings and the ever vain chase after the rainbows that span the sky of "imperialism," it *must* be true that the harmonies, international as well as domestic, were really greater than the discords. And who, imbued with any sense of the spiritually grand in history, can contemplate without inward emotion the spectacle of these peoples labouring from millennium to millennium succumbing in the end to the science and arts which they had originated and taught when the lessons had been learnt by the stronger pupils without? Much or little as independence might mean to the peoples who had held it in fee since Civilisation began, it is difficult for the student not to feel that, when the end came five hundred years before the time of Christ, "there passed away a glory from the earth."

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*The Jews.*—The sentiment just expressed may have its point emphasised by the statement that the five hundred years on hand saw the rise of monarchy in Israel, the exploits of David the great hero-king, the grandeur of Solomon,<sup>1</sup> the division of the kingdom, the prelections of the prophets, the deportation of the northern tribes and their evanishment<sup>2</sup> in Assyria, the capture of Jerusalem and the captivity of Judah by Nebuchadrezzar, the liberation under Cyrus, the priestly redaction of the Scriptures, the concentration of the cult in Jerusalem,<sup>3</sup> and not only complete political subjection but almost absolute historical obscurity for some fifty years. Yet the petty Jewish people, concentrating on their Scriptures, have maintained a unity in dispersion wellnigh unique in history.<sup>4</sup> It is

<sup>1</sup> It is a very favourite thesis that it was the Solomonic system of taxation which led to the division of the kingdom. In the writer's opinion the explanation is "*trop simpliste*." The exactions included the south as well as the north, and were perhaps less heavy than similar imposts in even more ostentatious monarchies. The irreconcilability seems to have been of the same deep-seated nature as that in north and south Germany in modern as well as mediæval times.

<sup>2</sup> These tribes continue to be "identified" by many people in various quarters by methods in which there is neither internal harmony nor general historical accord.

<sup>3</sup> See an extremely interesting and eloquent passage on this point in Frazer's *Folk Lore in the Old Testament*.

<sup>4</sup> The gypsies dispersed over the world manifest the possibility of a like sort of unity with no nucleus but unwritten laws and customs. The Jains in India too, in their devotion to commerce as against agriculture and their cleaving to a specific cult, show the same "peculiarity" as the Jews.

here suggested that the Jordan valley never could have been the basis of a permanent polity—uniformity under Solomon being as transient as that of the ancient Empire of Armenia, and more unstable than that of Poland in much later times. Nothing less than ceaseless supernatural patronage could have sustained any independence in Palestine in a world growing imperialistic in the very measure of its science. So the Jews themselves may profitably consider whether the blame for subjection is not more attributable to geography than to that “back-sliding” over which they still make their moan. Even to-day, when humanitarianism has become quite purposive in its efforts, it is found to be a terribly difficult thing to prop up the peoples of Asia Minor in defiance of the irreducible facts of geography and the uncured human nature of Europe as well as of the Near East. Be that as it may, in these centuries before Christ *tabula rasa* was made of Israel and only a Judean “remnant” returned from Babylon.<sup>1</sup> It began painfully to reconstitute its life, its walls, and its temple, harassed by the “Samaritans,”<sup>2</sup> but cheered by the patronage of Nehemiah, the Babylonian Jew who was high up in the councils of Persia, and seems to have been animated by the same motives as the Irish-American “bosses” of to-day when succouring “their own loved island of sorrow.” Decimated, and deprived of independence, it is easy to understand both priestly and popular concentration upon the literature of the Jews, which was to prove the indestructible spiritual cement of their unity and to give them a world influence utterly beyond the range of Babylonians and Egyptians with their libraries of sun-baked tablets and “star-y-pointing pyramids.”<sup>3</sup> It is not so easy to understand how, on

<sup>1</sup> A “remnant” had also been left behind who seem to have been the poorest of the population. Some leaders in the community escaped to Egypt before the Babylonian round up. Among them was the prophet Jeremiah famous for his “Lamentations.”

<sup>2</sup> These “Samaritans” (or rather Shimronites) though “Semites” were not of the Jewish strain apparently. They had been “planted” when the Ten Tribes were deported, even as King James I of England colonised Ulster. North Palestine thereafter exercised great linguistic pressure, displacing Hebrew with that “Aramaic” spoken by Christ himself.

<sup>3</sup> The Koran, of course, tends to unite Arabs in their dispersion just as the Bible does. The poetry of Robert Burns even has a marked nucleating power among the Scotsmen scattered all over the world,

the assumption that the priests were the redactors of the accumulated lore, they should have preserved among the ritualistic and "gnomic" writings not only the more democratic sayings of the prophets, but also the quite caustic criticisms of the order to which they themselves belonged.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, however, as strait-laced ecclesiastics in our time not only read but recommended the works of these modern "seers"—Carlyle and Ruskin—so the Judean priests might have let slip the prelections of Isaiah, Nahum, and the "herdsman of Tekoa." In any event the Jews from 1000 to 500 B.C. ran the whole gamut of their political life, and here pass off the stage of history, to be handled hereafter mainly as thorns in the flesh of every nation into whose sides they were pressed.

*India.*—From 1000 to 500 B.C. India remains a land of principalities, but they form and reform with the tenuous confusion of clouds on the horizon, while Brahmanism retains its solar force, even when, about 532 B.C., Sid-dartha renounced the world and became known thenceforth as Buddha "the Enlightened One." His doctrine, like all systems which attempt to embody ultimate ideas within the frailties of language, is not easy to comprehend, and received no great hospitality in the land where speech is more tumid than elsewhere, and almost any religion can be absorbed into the infinitely elastic mythology. Buddhism, like Christianity, was to find ultimate accommodation outside the land of its birth. In 612 B.C. Darius the Persian was campaigning in north-west India, with what political result remains uncertain.

*China.*—In China about 1000 B.C. the people seem to have known about the magnetic needle, and used it in various ways. About 900 B.C. the Tatars are troublesome in the north, and remain a menace even after the building of the Great Wall about 700 years later. About 560 B.C. "Lao-tse endeavours to unify Chinese dualism into a

emigrants from the homeland becoming all the greater devotees of the cult the further they are from the shrine. Some scholars hold that the Jews, deprived of their country, altered their conceptions of "Jehovah" as the patron of but one little corner of the earth, universalism being forced on their thought under the competition of Persian and other cults.

<sup>1</sup> This is a point which the writer has put to many Biblical scholars of his acquaintance without ever eliciting what was thought to be a convincing answer. The author would welcome a reply from any student who thinks he has mastered the subject.

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single primal existence (Tao) void of consciousness and to conceive the manifold variety of things as held together by a single supreme principle.”<sup>1</sup> His sect seems to have been honoured at one time and persecuted at another. His contemporary, Confucius, who was also alternately persecuted and patronised, “stamps upon the national life the worship of ancestors rather than of their Creator.” He expressed the golden rule in this form, “What you do not like when done to yourself do not do to others.” The figure of Confucius in history is as positive and well defined as the conceptions of Lycurgus and even of Solon are vague and legendary. Direct descendants of Confucius still exist in China, and are (or were) pensioned by the State. He is the only historical law-giver of whom these things can be said.

*Persia.*—In the Iranian tablelands, though dynasties had been rising and falling since those of the earliest “Elamites” and much blood was constantly being spilled, it lies on the face of the case that the people had been growing in knowledge and numbers if in its more anti-social forms. It only needed the man of organising power preaching the ordinary gospel of plunder to make the peoples unite against all the rest of the world. Such an organising genius appeared in Persia in the person of the illustrious Cyrus, whose military talent is beyond dispute if his life is half mythical in so much of its embroidery. Gathering up the energies of mountaineer, tiller, merchant, and artisan in the diversified, if dispersed, culture of Persia, he went forward conquering and to conquer. In all probability many of the circumjacent peoples were yoked to the chariot of imperialism, since it is hardly credible that, making all necessary allowances for exaggeration, Persia proper could have furnished the relatively huge if motley armies which campaigned in the vast quadrilateral of lands from India to Greece. At any rate, the hunters, shepherds, tillers, artisans, and merchants, the men of the mountains and the plains of Iran, formed a natural military

<sup>1</sup> The reader is warned against taking this as an accurate statement of Lao-tse's doctrine. It is only one of many which have been encountered by the writer who, of course, has no knowledge of Chinese. Even perfection in that language might not justify any statement whatever, since it is alleged that Lao-tse himself left nothing, and that the “sayings,” invented later, cannot possibly be harmonised.

nucleus whose central position, standing for the well-known advantage of "interior lines," enabled attack to be made in overwhelming force in whatever direction was chosen. In these intermingled geographical, ethnic, and commercial and economic elements,<sup>1</sup> we have the clue to Persia's singular pertinacity as a world force. Though the country suffered defeat again and again, and though internal convulsions induced decadence, no country in history has manifested the same power to arise phoenix-like from its political ashes, being aggressive down to recent times when the land power of Russia and the sea-power of Britain clasped it as between pincers. But we are dealing now only with the first great explosion under Cyrus, who was a conqueror from Bactriana to the Nile and the Hellespont. He died obscurely in battle about 529 B.C., leaving his son Cambyses to play a madman's part with almost unbridled sway. Despite dynastic trouble the Persians, under Darius, got stronger and stronger, and by 512 B.C. are in Europe collecting tribute from Macedonian kings. And thus Greece came on the stage of world-history.

*Greece.*—1. It is common ground that, taking even into account what has been irretrievably lost, the Greek Civilisation is the highest of the ancient world, excelling not only in sheer intellectual power, but also in the grace, naturalness, and versatility of its manifestations. It laid captive the taste and intelligence of the Roman conquerors. Though it failed to ennoble the Byzantines, who were the heirs and custodiers of the culture, the liberation of the learning latterly informed, if it by no means caused, the Renaissance, while modern minds, at least in universities and schools of art, have frequently given themselves over spellbound to the ancient enchantment. And the people who achieved this culture, so impressive in its remains, has been many a time simply voted as "divine"—the genesis, decline, and disappearance of the inspiration all being equally inexplicable. It simply pleased Providence to project the intelligence labelled "Hellenic" into the world's affairs at a certain moment, and then to

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<sup>1</sup> Far back in history Persian cotton was much esteemed and art fabrics held a premier place for texture, colour, and design. In Mohammedan times trade was not despised by the aristocracy as in the other countries, even the "King of Kings" himself having his hand in the commercial pie.

withdraw the influence when the racial "mission" was accomplished. We have thus such neat formulæ as those already indicated that it was the mission of the Jews to give Religion to the world, of the Greeks to supply Art, and of the Romans to furnish Law. The reader may rest content with these dogmas if he desires, but it deserves to be said here that the scheme is entirely out of perspective. Religion had been discovered long before any Jewish systematisation had imposed itself upon the world ; art of a strikingly high order had been manifested by cavemen ; while law had been highly codified thousands of years before the Romans, who under the spur of special necessity set about co-ordinations which tended almost as much to sanctify abuses as to establish broad, social equity, which has not seldom found its deadliest enemy in the letter of the Roman jurisprudence, or the traditions of its incomparable power.<sup>1</sup> It may not be quite true, as remarked by Voltaire, that there was more inventiveness in the skull of Archimedes than in the head of Homer. But, at any rate, inventiveness had preceded the Greeks by hundreds of thousands of years. The man, or rather people, who invented tools must have had originating minds of the highest order. So must the people who first manipulated fire, invented the wheel, discovered the malleability of the metals, and so on in a hundred other cases. The fact is that the human brain had reached full size and probably complete complexity hundreds of thousands of years ago. It seems, however, that its faculties may be *latent* in any community until special stimuli, working through generations perhaps, evoke general activities which may continue indefinitely as long as the conditions are favourable. The conditions may never rise to evoke the talent as in the case of many savages in the tropics, or they may tarry as in the case of the Russians, who seem to have excellent brains hitherto stifled by the political conditions. But these brains energised mightily in the direction that was freest to them before the war, namely fiction which inclined to philosophy and "realism" because of the particular circumstances. So far at least as the peoples of the temperate zone are concerned it is not

<sup>1</sup> Again it may not be inappropriate to remark that it is a lawyer who indulges in these criticisms.

so much a case of cerebral outfit as of environment conditioning talent all the time—keeping it perhaps permanently in subjection, or, after allowing full scope, again vetoing it as by the pressure of atmospheres upon the soul. Thus apparently the Greeks were tyros like other people at a certain time in their history, botching their art like any amateurs, but, later, both originating and refining to the fullest possible extent, and again sinking into insipidity or absolute silence because of quite obvious changes in the conditions unfavourable to activity on the old lines. Thus Greek genius is no more mysterious than Egyptian pyramidal talent, Mayan astronomy, Renaissance art, Dutch painting, or British inventiveness by way of the spinning-jenny and the steam-engine. There may have been specialisation, or intensification of effort, in the Greek case arising from circumstances traceable in greater or less degree, but any “mystery” that effeirs to their case is simply the problem of the human soul in general, and not of a particular manifestation of its nature or power. If there is any science in history at all, then the Greeks fall into the secular line like all the other peoples of the earth, however high they may be graded within the limits of the human. Let us therefore approach the present problem, not in transcendentalism, but in “the mundane mood” that helps and does not hinder science.

2. The reader should be on his guard against too narrow a conception of Greece geographically. We know no more about the origin of the Greeks than about the origin of any other race. What we do know for certain is that they were a mongrel breed like most other communities, and perhaps the very intimate mixture of not too antagonistic ingredients had much to do with the particular brilliancy of their efflorescence. But the point now is that Athens, Sparta, and the southern shores of the Balkan peninsula never were conterminous with the Greek race which inhabited the mainland of Asia Minor as well as its archipelago, and formed indeed a maritime fringe on the Mediterranean from quite early times. The Greece of to-day was thus only the historical pivot of a Civilisation that may have actually begun on the Asiatic coast, but condensed its effulgences on the European shore. Greece, like Japan and Malaysia, was an essentially maritime

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country, but differed from these cultures in two notable aspects : (1) There was a thicker cluster of "manageable" islands off the shores, a constellation indeed of almost unique density. (2) Japan fronted the illimitable Pacific, and its communications therefore were only round its own islands and to and from the continental shores with their massive "Mongolian" life. The Malays, too, had the widest possible oceanic frontage screened by the hopeless savagery of the East Indian Islands—the greatest constellation in the world, condemned however to worse than barbarism by its location on the equator with its hot, moist climate and inexorable lassitude. As we have seen, however, the Malays did great things in navigation, making perhaps longer hauls even than the Greeks ; but the massiveness of the Chinese and Indian Civilisations with which they came into contact could not have the educative effect of the more "temperate" cultures bordering the Mediterranean with their more active, if less dense, populations. Greece's position was maritime but not "oceanic." She lay near the junction of *three* continents, where they converge on inland waterways that are really inimitable. With the oldest Civilisations in the world south and east of her, and with a whole continent behind her of the highest possible potentialities, it is not so much a wonder as it would have been a shame had the Greeks not made their mark in the developing dispensation of things. Their country was mountainous and fertile in parts, but absolutely barren in others. So the sea called them more than the land withheld them, and they became mariners after the example of the Phœnicians. They competed for the traffic of a world growing in commercialism, and had not only a better base than their Punic rivals, but also, probably, less mercenary material in the manning of their ships, since the breeding ground for sailors was far greater than on the strip of Syrian seaboard, which, besides, as already noted, had a much greater agricultural population than is generally supposed. Just as Britain benefited ultimately by the discovery of America and became the great intermediary between East and West as the new world developed in resources, so did increment accrue to Greece when the "new world" of Europe developed for the ancient peoples. And the historic parallel is even



closer than that bare statement indicates. Just as the Greeks ran the Phœnicians and other traffickers into entirely subordinate positions, so did Britain oust Portuguese, Spaniards, and Dutch, essentially because she was better placed geographically than her rivals. And the Greeks have never lost hold of the sea despite ages of political subjection. It is their life as ordained by nature. Even if Britannia ceased to rule the waves she would continue to ride them in excess of continental efforts also because of "geographical predestination."

3. What has just been indicated defines, as summarily as possible, Greece's natural rôle in history. She was maritime to her very marrow, and, economically, essentially an intermediary, since the relative infertility of her soil made her less of a producer than a carrier. In culture, however, she was not only a distributor of ideas, but also a creator and refiner of them in all the diversified looms of her intelligence. Doubtless there was once predaciousness in Greece alike of the sea, the mountains, and the plains, however poorly developed these last might be. The fact that the island of Crete was the centre of a culture long before that of the mainland is quite in line with the law of the priority of civilisations already outlined. For the size of the island would allow local predaciousness to be absorbed sooner than on the mainland, its distance would tend to protect it from continental interference, while its internal resources promoted peaceful trade upon which it seems to have thrived exceedingly. Even if national development had been a wholly peaceful process, the special prosperity of some districts could only have been transitory, especially if the trade be founded less upon native productivity than as being of an *entrepôt* character. But, in a world full of malignity, such prosperity may be balanced as on the edge of a razor. Crete apparently suffered both from the secular shift of things and the purely malignant dispensation of humanity. And so an extraordinary (though not inexplicable) island culture got so overlaid with spilt blood and cosmic dust that only to-day the wealth of its *débris* is being revealed to the world. It is only one more instance of the dualism that afflicts humanity—the propensity to live and let live countered by the instinct to kill or be killed, whatever the motive.

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4. What has already been said about the fishermen of Japan may apply equally well to the case of ancient Greece. Though piracy may have been an everyday fact in Mediterranean life, the tendency to fixity may have been stronger still for the reasons already discussed, and here held as repeated *brevitatis causa*. In any case we have in Greece not only the psychosis of the mariner, but also that of the mountaineer and, especially, the merchant. Before what is known as the Dorian invasion<sup>1</sup> (a semi-barbaric irruption apparently from the north) there seems to have been settlement upon monarchical lines. The kings seem to have been many but the kingdoms small, a result due to the mountainousness of the country. But, though the hills divided, the inimitable sinuosities of the sea yet connected the most disparate areas which bred kinship apparently without inducing centralisation. Thus, though there were dialects in Greece, language seems to have been a common coin, and ideas could there be refined indefinitely in all the varying crucibles of thought. Hence, although we have a common mythology (borrowed largely from Asiatic sources where elaboration had already begun), there is no end of graceful embroidery characteristic of almost every corner of the land. It was simply folk-lore raised to the highest poetical pitch by relatively unfettered intelligence. For, though superstition was not absent from the Grecian mind (as witness the hemlock draught of Socrates and the flight of Anaxagoras for alleging the materiality of the sun), the absence of centralised priestcraft meant much for freedom and versatility in thinking. Every man tended to be his own priest,<sup>2</sup> and religion was thus relatively democratic, with a premium upon the myth-making faculty to the fullest extent. In so far as religion was authoritative rather than personal it had its centre apparently in the king, who was perhaps more a sacerdotalist than a politician. Monarchism thus did not

<sup>1</sup> The Dorians seem to have conquered as much by the use of steel as by barbarity. Homeric Greece was a bronze civilisation and owed its eclipse to a refinement in weapons better appreciated by barbarians than by more civilised people seemingly. It is like the Turks with their cannon in the last days of Constantinople (see hereafter, p. 323).

<sup>2</sup> Similar tendencies exist in China and Japan, but the line of evolution may have been quite different.

have the oppressive power manifested in the desert and monsoon cultures. And kingship, light as its oppression may have been, was so rudely challenged in Greece that it practically disappeared. We have seen that, while nomadism consists well with "republicanism" in politics, tillage had as an almost invariable concomitant the despotism of a single individual. It was pointed out as against such despotism the only modification manifested in ancient civilisations was "republicanism," induced to all appearance by the moneyed or merchant class. In Phœnicia, and more especially in the daughter state of Carthage, this "republicanism" (which was the rule of a trading committee, so to say, none of whose members was allowed to rise to domination because of the jealousies of the rest) made itself manifest. The revolt against royalty in Greece seems to have been what we would to-day call a *bourgeois* movement. It is extremely interesting to trace the movement in so far as it stands revealed in the ancient records—to find how mariners, mountaineers, landlords, merchants, and others shaped the political conditions of things according to the strength of their varying interests. Perhaps the best view is still to be obtained in the works of Fustel de Coulanges, especially in the classic "*Cité Antique*."<sup>1</sup> Athens, the most mercantile and maritime state, manifested the greatest amount of democracy as that was understood in those times; while Sparta (which had passed through tremendous troubles long before Athens showed the like turbulence) settled into a certain comparative equilibrium due to its more land-locked position, its greater agricultural resources, and its determined militarism, which was not unlike that of the Iroquois in North America. In no ancient case is the geographical control so well vouched, so obvious, and yet so intricate and so interesting as that of Greece. It is the microcosm of antiquity.

5. It seems beyond doubt that the mercantilism of ancient Greece had much to do with the artistic efflorescence of the race. Art, as we have seen, roots in surplus energy. In the savage and the barbarian it may hardly reach beyond the bizarre; in the despotic tillage civilisations it tended to the grandiose, although the

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<sup>1</sup> See also Zimmern's *The Greek Commonwealth*.

evolution of China and Japan showed that exquisiteness might be attained to in the plastic arts, if graciousness tarried in the realm of mind. It needed the touch of freedom for which ancient "democracy" stood to give inspiration in every line—philosophy, history, poetry, drama, sculpture, painting, oratory. But, if freedom gave expression its chance, mercantilism co-operated as regards rewards more substantial than the plaudits of the people. Just as in renescent Italy, later, the wealthy, travelled merchants of Greece sought to surround themselves with things of beauty in their city as well as in their home, and, untrammelled by convention like the despot, thus acted as a seminal influence in the artistry of their age. Thus, though the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" might "rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea," it required the patronage of Peisistratus (who was mercantilist even if he was a "tyrant" in the ancient and sinisterless sense of the term) to save the poems that were to become "the etherealised Pentateuch of the Grecian peoples—with gods many and lords many but a greater unity in design despite the touch of other hands than Homer's." An intimately mixed and highly leavened people, a land that divided but a sea that united, a culture of the sea, of the mountains, of the valley, of the plain, and a location at the junction of the three continents where ideas clashed and economic tides heaped up wealth on the shores of opportunity—such were the influences contributing to "the glory that was Greece" which was to be submerged in "the grandeur that was Rome."

6. But, of course, vice as well as virtue has etched itself on the pages of Grecian history. In Homeric Greece slavery seems to have been comparatively rare, just because the general circumstances made the system "uneconomic." But the growth of population, the struggle of state with state, and especially the development of trade and commerce led to a terrible expansion of the evil. The traffic in human flesh and blood became profitable and was exploited accordingly, Greece "dreeing a weird" that Egypt, China, and India had transcended; just as, in our time, the "free" United States persisted in a slavery which the older cultures of Europe had outgrown. The disproportion between bond and free in

Greece became very great. About the year 300 B.C. there were in Attica 400,000 slaves to 21,000 free citizens. In Sparta there were over 200,000 helots governed by some 5000 citizens who, with the women and children, totalled only about 30,000. Greece indeed became the great slave market of the East. The "freedom" for which Greece stood was thus only the apex of a pyramid very broadly based in social subjection. Since intellectualism reached such a pitch among the Hellenes it *must* be the case that high Civilisation is not inconsistent with gross enough popular privation. But it is an ill-based society all the same, since there is nothing human can justify bondage, not even exquisite art, for it is the price of a misery not less great in the eye of science because it may be almost unfelt on the part of the victim. One of the worst features of the system (a feature which is characteristic not only of all servile states but even of labour markets where colour is the dividing mark, as in South Africa) was that class of "mean whites" which will neither work nor starve, and is therefore one of the most unstable elements in society. Beyond all doubt this class wrought much harm to the Grecian politics, although the Civilisation could never have been brought to ruin by any such inward waywardness merely. But it enlarged the seed-bed of corruption upon which the tares of treachery might be planted in the hours of political eclipse. Thus while Greece might have sloughed her servile skin in the end (despite the dogmatic view of Aristotle who could not envisage society except in terms of bondage), the forces outside did not wait for the evolution any more than did the malignities within abide with patience any reconciliations that time could bring. For Greece was not only seamed with petty jealousies,<sup>1</sup> but corroded also with the greatest imperial ambitions. For one moment the European branch of the race combined against the onslaught of Persia, which was turned aside rather than defeated by superior sea-power. Centuries

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<sup>1</sup> So persistent were these jealousies even while Greece was a Roman province that cities set "free" by Nero only used it for the purpose of fighting each other instead of the Romans. Vespasian took away a liberty which he indicated could only be abused (Dury, *History of Rome*, ii. 194).

of declamation have enskied that episode as a conflict between "tyranny" and "liberty," between "barbarism" and "civilisation," when culture was only saved by the frail barrier of Grecian patriots, if not indeed, in the last analysis, by the three hundred who died at Thermopylæ. Here it is suggested that the whole thing is out of perspective. Persia was not really a barbarism, and was almost singular in ancient times for the toleration bound up with her autonomous practices. Many Greeks, too, were on the Persian side as much apparently by conviction as by interest, and the melancholy truth is that, so far from the Greeks saving Civilisation in any liberationist sense, they adopted rather the policy of Persia, and attempted to institute a universal despotism not one whit more "enlightened" than that of the eastern potentates whom superior rhetoric has put into the pillory for all time. After the victories of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea not only did the heroes Themistocles and Pausanias open up relations with Persia, but the Greeks also resumed the internecine warfare which had only been suspended by the Persian intervention. These wars of the Greeks are not to be rationalised except on the grounds already discussed—the imperativeness of the belligerent instincts, fighting for the mere sake of fighting, over and above the desire for political domination and the "capture" of markets which are apt to disappear in the act of conquest. Probably, however, the fights were extremely small for the most part—as much contests *pour rire* as those of the Italians of the Renaissance, when a whole day's conflict might not leave a single corpse to pollute the atmosphere. But things grew serious enough in all conscience after the retreat of the Persian. In the blind struggle for power Athens and Sparta became singled out as competitors in the fight for hegemony—that most delusive of rainbows spanning the political sky, as already remarked. After thirty years of struggle, including colonies and mother country in one vast insane welter of ambitions, the Athens of Pericles succumbed to the more robust but less versatile Lacedæmonians. It was a tragedy in its way, but not in the least a "turning-point in history" as so often contended. Athens was only comparatively less insane in her political

conceptions than Sparta, and her triumph in the then disposition of things could not have affected world politics by imposing a yoke more intellectual which could not have been lasting. Athens might not be exhausted in talent, but the only geniuses who could have permanently availed her in a Europe advancing in predaciousness as well as in civilisation, would have been those of a world compelling kind who would have preached peace and made the world pursue it. And that "turning-point" has not been reached in history even yet.

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7. Sparta did not long enjoy the hegemony to which she had attained. She began filibustering in Asia Minor, but soon Thebes, under Epaminondas, shattered a militarist reputation in a fashion that might really have wrought some general benefit had not a new menace been piling up in the rear of Greece proper. It pleased the Greeks to consider the Macedonians as barbarians in comparison with themselves. But though the popular way of life in Macedonia may have been coarser or simpler than in the south, the Macedonian leaders were anything but barbarians. King Philip was intelligent, although he was not always sober, while his son Alexander was "tutored" by Aristotle. Macedonia, too, had the largest rivers and valleys of all Greece, and had the greatest land resources of any Hellenic state, while it had also maritime resources to supplement sufficiently the imperialism into which it had instinctively grown. With superior military science helping, it was quite natural, therefore, that Macedonia under her extremely able kings should, like most other states, have made a bid for world-power, and should have succeeded to a much greater extent than the lesser Greek peoples. There was nothing to tempt Alexander northwards into the old Scythian plains. There was more westwards among the native states growing wealthy and settled under Grecian example on the shores of the great inland sea. But the west was really as unattractive to Alexander<sup>1</sup> in those days as, later, were the shores of America to Napoleon, who, to the end, remained fascinated by the east with its suggestions of gems, gold, spices, and superabounding wealth in men as well as in material. The exploits of the Ten Thousand and of the Kings of Sparta

<sup>1</sup> He seems to have meditated an attack on Carthage.

indicated that the east could be more effectively invaded from Europe than Asia could conquer in the west. So Alexander turned towards the more purple landscapes with their greater lure and ampler chances of glory. He went to the Indus, and even stirred up Bactriana, giving the east the first great known shog it had received from the west. To all appearance a considerable cultural uplift may have accompanied the military violence, but Civilisation cannot be established by fury either in commerce or war. While some of Alexander's cities were well enough chosen, others were not, and the artificial vivifications soon perished in the political welter that ensued after the victor's death in Babylon. Alexander was neither the first nor the greatest of conquerors, although he was apparently one of the cleverest. In reality he seems to have been a despot whose enlightenment was getting quickly obscured in the orientalism in which he foundered. His genius might have enabled him to maintain an empire centred in Mesopotamia like that of the Caliphs later, but it would have been at the expense of practically renouncing his native land, which was worsened instead of bettered by his spendthrift fury. Like others before and after him the conqueror created an imperial monstrosity which none but he could command, and it remains questionable if the world did not suffer more than it benefited by the genius of which he was an all too common type.

8. After Alexander's death, leagues ultimately manifested themselves among the Grecian states more hopeful, at least for inward stability, than anything in the turbulent past. But, just as the rise of Macedonia had been ominous for Greece proper, so the rise of a new Mediterranean state became menacing, not only for Greece, but also for all the countries bordering the inland sea. The emergence of Constantinople later showed that a very considerable empire might be ruled from that really inimitable site. But, in Alexander's time, Europe had not sufficiently awakened to make the Bosphorus a tenable or desirable political centre. It is not in the least likely therefore that, had Alexander gone west instead of east, he might, as some have speculated, have prevented Rome from rising to regal might in the Mediterranean. Phœnicia showed how little power the Levant had to the west



compared with the position of Carthage, whose abounding mercenariness was more than compensated for by its excellent central geographical position. And, though Belisarius conquered in the west for Byzantium, the lands could not be held from such an "eccentric" position. Greece, therefore, had other things been equal, was bound in the long run to yield the palm to Rome, whose case is one of the clearest in history of "geographical predestination." To its consideration we now come.

*Rome.*—1. Tradition has it that the Tarquins were expelled from Rome in 510 B.C. The tradition is valid enough for purposes of introduction here.

Rome as an empire was neither the largest in area, nor included the greatest number of human beings, nor lasted the longest of the great imperial states in history. Even Byzantium, which was simply the eastern section of the full-orbed state, lasted nearly twice as long as the specifically "Latin" portion of the Empire. But, as the first great *European* state casting both its light and shadows on the borders of Africa and hither Asia, it is, in its way, the most memorable in history, alike for what it achieved and what it failed to achieve. It is instructive alike as regards its absorption of culture, its elaboration of civilisation, and even its very perversions of conduct. From small beginnings in haunts of bandits or communes of aggressive peasants (or in both) the State, despite constant inward turmoils, grew and grew by conquests or half-peaceful absorptions, until it comprehended the whole countries of the Mediterranean Sea, with outliers running almost to the shores of the Persian Gulf and the Scottish Hebrides. Great in art, literature, and law, it set the rule of life for centuries to the most diverse peoples, while the State sometimes rocked to its political foundations, but, in better moments, was so stable and prosperous that Gibbon doubted if men had ever been happier than in the age of the Antonines. Though Latin ceased to be a living language it gave rise to daughter tongues which are the most influential in the world to-day. Even the barbarians who overran the Empire yielded to the spell of its might, and many leaders sought to make themselves heirs of its functions rather than the destroyers of its powers. Far away even on the plains of Asia, the name

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of "Roum" acted as a spell to the shepherd tribes, haunting their minds with a sense of wealth which lured them like a mirage to the west. To this incomparable Empire then let us apply the principles of elucidation here held in view throughout.

2. Italy is one of the most distinct of "geographical units." The Alps which bound it on the north are the highest hills in Europe. Though they are not so clean cut as the Pyrenees and have more manageable passes, they are yet a very distinct boundary line, climatically, zoologically, racially, and politically. The sea defines the country on the west, the south, and the east, and it is the most uncompromising of boundaries. The Italian coast is more massive and much more regular than that of Greece, and has very few good natural ports. Until art supplemented nature in the later centuries this circumstance had the effect of making the Italian peoples less maritime than the Greeks, as we shall see. Like Greece, Italy is a mountainous country, but the Apennines which form the backbone of the land have more regularity than the Hellenic hills—a circumstance which favoured centralisation in greater degree, since there was less cantonal diversity, though sufficient differentiation to have its own effect on culture. The comparatively greater development of plains in Italy caused it to have more agricultural wealth, and this increased lure of the land, together with less beckoning power of the sea, had also its effect on character. While Greece had only torrential rivers Italy, besides possessing some considerable streams, had one great artery of water in the Po, traversing the Lombard plain and making it fertile with its alluvial deposits. In a word Italy, larger in area, with greater internal resources if a less maritime outlook, had, in its incomparable central position, a jumping off ground for empire far better than the Hellenic lands, and, apart even from special military genius, must have worn down the Greeks by the sheer secular oppression of circumstances. The only question then really is, how did Italy apparently lag behind Greece in culture, and in that race for hegemony which is a universal passion?

3. Italy has the same climatic *régime* as Greece—that is to say, dry summers and wet winters—with, of course,

a certain amount of variation in the cases which does not concern us now. The peninsula then, like Greece, had the same climatic advantages as regards the spontaneous rise of culture, comparing both instances with the hinterlands as discussed in former sections. What, then, can we lay our finger upon to account for Italy's retardation? We may say that the races of the peninsula were naturally less alert than the Greeks. But in view of the fact that apparently denser minded Egyptians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Hindus, Chinese, and, perhaps, Mexicans and Peruvians preceded the Greeks themselves in culture, we see at once that the resort to ethnology is once more useless. What we can point to is the fact that Greece lay much nearer to the radiative centres of culture, and, other things being equal, should naturally have responded much earlier to the stimuli that neighboured her life. But other factors may have impeded Italy. The relative massiveness of her coast-line, for instance, may have prevented the penetration that was possible in the case of Greece because of the sinuousness of her shores, and thus native recalcitrance in Italy may have had a firmer footing against the extraneous influences of progress that have often been stronger than the merely spontaneous. It is possible also that, taking into account the fact of nomadism in the European hinterlands, Italy may have had less protection from invasion in the single transverse barrier of the Alps than Greece enjoyed by the various ranges that ran athwart the path of the invaders. How fierce and incorrigible mid-European predatoriness was we may gather from the impressive fact of the ancient lake-dwellings in Switzerland. Man had no need to enter into such extraordinary labour as these structures implied from fear of wild beasts. They are symbolical simply of the most uncompromising malignity on earth—that of man towards his brother man. These lacustrine shelters are really equivalents of the irrigation works in the desert Civilisations. Perched within the northern boundaries of Italy they indicate vividly enough what fierce combats may have been engaged in on the plains and hillsides of the summer peninsula beneath with its rather impenetrable shores, causing culture to hobble far in the rear of the more insular east. These considerations do not

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exhaust the possibilities of the case, but may be sufficiently complete to indicate how, in the writer's opinion, thoughts should tend in this connection.

4. What is extremely important for the reader to bear in mind is the fact that, before the emergence of the system specifically known as Roman or Latin, cultures had been developing in other areas and among different people inhabiting the peninsula. Originally the plain of Lombardy seems to have been largely heath and marsh, and, in the earlier stages of Roman history, was in possession of the "Gauls," and more alien perhaps to the south than was Macedonia to the more insular Greeks. The culture condition of these Gauls is simply a matter of conjecture. But it is safe to say they were less settled and advanced than the people known as "Etruscan" who inhabited the province since called after them—"Tuscany." Where the Etruscans came from we do not know, although they have been associated with the Hittites of equally mysterious renown. Their language, of which they have left many written specimens, remains undecipherable—"staring in unbroken, glassy defiance at the beholder," as some one has put it. The Apennines seem to have afforded them protection from continental predatoriness in sufficient degree to enable them to elaborate a really striking civilisation in architectural ways, like nearly every other culture of the time. It was they who initiated Rome into the arts, as it would seem—the *cloaca maxima*, the wall named after Servius Tullius—indeed all the remains of monarchical Rome have been credited to them. They were traders and pirates apparently, being masters of the Tyrrhenian Sea, which is called after an alternative appellation of theirs. Almost as well placed geographically as Rome, the Etruscans had quite as good a chance to all appearance of dominating the peninsula as their southern neighbours, who were friends and enemies by turn. The reason probably why Etruria failed in this respect is, that the ruling caste were really an intrusive stock never properly amalgamated with the aborigines and, like Carthage, they had to depend essentially upon mercenaries to maintain their position. It is also suspected that they were a morose people, more priest-ridden than merchant states are apt to be,

gluttonous also and given to sport of the inhuman kind, it being surmised that the Roman gladiatorial games were derived from Etruscan examples. All these would be good reasons for understanding why hegemony just escaped Etruria, although perhaps the chief cause was the pressure of predatoriness from the north which the Etruscans could not permanently resist. In fighting it however to the death they acted as a buffer state to the Roman people, which was only once seriously menaced by what, ever afterwards, was known as the "Gaulish terror."

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5. In south Italy it was the Greeks who were for long the dominating people. The Phœnicians had many coastal settlements in the Mediterranean, but they were more counting-houses than colonies. The Greeks however settled on the Italian shores in such numbers that the country threatened to become more Hellenic than the homeland, and was actually known as "Greater Greece." Syracuse in Sicily was one of the most prosperous of cities "as remarkable in ancient western expansion as New York became in Anglo-Saxon colonisation." It was the Athenian failure before Syracuse (largely contributed to by ritualistic impediments that were a normal feature of ancient warfare), which is considered the turning point in the murderous and stupid struggle known as the Peloponnesian war, which lasted for thirty years. But, probably, the Greeks were never so numerous as the native Italians among whom they settled, and would have had perhaps insuperable difficulty in making the peninsula as Hellenic as Australia has been made British. It is also to be remembered that the Greeks, so desperately divided at home, were equally disunited abroad—the colonies echoing with almost every battle-cry of the motherland, and perhaps even complicating the issues because of local grounds of quarrel in the alien environment, even as Orangemen and Catholics are sometimes more "polarised" abroad than in some parts of Ireland itself. Thus, Italy, at once benefited and distracted by Grecian culture, could not yet be centralised politically by such an influence. We thus see how unity had almost of necessity to come about by "native" effort, by what was manifestly the best kind of material working in the best possible position.

6. If the reader will look at the map of Italy he will

find that the Apennines, which have their northern roots in the Gulf of Genoa, begin to trend across the peninsula, and, in their central development, lie nearer the Adriatic than the Tyrrhenian Sea. The result is that the largest and most fertile plains slope towards the latter sea, which also has better harbours than the opposite shores. While, therefore, the southern shores of Italy and Sicily looked towards the east and gave readier hospitality to the civilised influences radiating from that quarter, Italy, on its western central coasts, looked entirely towards the west, which, in those times, was the loneliest part of the Mediterranean, and still non-radiative in the matter of native culture. This westward look of Rome with the lofty Apennines at its back favoured development upon specially "independent" lines, although, of course, no nation in touch with the world, however feebly, can be absolutely original. But Rome, in consequence of her situation, gave her own stamp to the ideas she borrowed from other quarters. The river Tiber which rises in the Apennines is a torrential stream, more so perhaps to-day than in ancient times, probably on account of the deforestation of its mountain sources. It therefore carries a great deal of alluvium which tends to choke up its mouth by tongues of land constantly advancing seaward. It was however a navigable stream, if not in the modern sense, yet for the much lighter craft of ancient times. With its affluents it forms by far the largest river system of *peninsular* Italy. About thirty miles from the mouth, just below where the tributaries all gather to form a single flood and rather less than halfway between the sea and the nearest foot-hills of the Apennines, arose the city of Rome upon a group of small hills<sup>1</sup> skirting the river, which were easy to fortify, and were also defended by the marshes of the stream. In the ancient disposition of things it was an "inevitable" site for a city, but more for administrative than for commercial purposes. For, though there was a natural convergence of traffic at the neck of the river-system

<sup>1</sup> There are more than seven hills within the civic circuit of Rome, but the city will remain thirled to that number probably more on account of its mystic quality than of actual historical fact. There was probably only one hill to begin with which contained anything like a "city," and others were included as the population grew. But we do not know how long the figure seven was strictly applicable.

causing Rome to be an *entrepôt* from the earliest times, the city had not natural resources sufficient to make it a commercial centre like Babylon, Corinth, or Carthage. Less immersed in mercantilism therefore than some of its rivals, it could devote so much more of its energy in the direction of imperialism which sometimes has been thwarted by too great commercial pre-occupation. From the economic point of view therefore Rome (at least as regards its rise to greatness) was more of a tollhouse than a warehouse. Its people were able to scout up and down the river-system which it commanded, and from its position midway between the sea and the hills to dominate the highways on either side of its eyrie. So much for the natural geographic advantages of the position. What now as to the human material which formed the kernel of so much greatness?

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7. It had natural advantages as great as the geographical framework into which it was fitted. What race first inhabited the hills at the neck of the Tiber we can never know. Probably these hills formed a defence for many different peoples, some of whom may have been totally destroyed in the internecine warfare that is peculiar to human groups as has been already insisted upon. Since, however, the races that may have supplanted their predecessors were not in the least likely to be themselves quite pure in their blood, we have, once more, to posit admixture as regards the ethnology of the case. But the crucibles of the matter are, and must remain, far too deep for our alchemy. What we may legitimately enough conclude is that what commixtion there was may have been all to the good in inducing greater sturdiness of character perhaps, and more progressive ways for the reasons formerly advanced. What may be taken as absolutely certain is that the compost contained all the ingredients fitted for a good ethnological pie—the mountaineer, the plainman, the merchant (however peddling), and the seaman, if but a longshoreman compared with the Phœnician or Greek. But the chief element was undoubtedly the peasant class who apparently engaged in mixed farming, being pastoralists seemingly as well as intensive tillers of the soil. Developing in all probability from the “republicanism” characteristic of all rural society of an

essentially pastoral type, these peasants must have conserved a great amount of freedom compared with the fellahin of the more advanced communities and before conquest either precipitated them into slavery, as we shall see, or undermined their position by the influx of alien bondmen. Having to fight year in and year out in what were presumably comparatively petty wars for communal existence, the ancient Roman farming class must have been kept constantly on its mettle. For, in certain circumstances, life may quite well consist in ploughing and sowing in spring and summer and resorting to fist-cuffs in the off-season, either for a little loot or for the fun of the thing, as happened many a time in the border wars between England and Scotland. Probably ancient Roman life was largely of this borderland type, which might mean less destruction than distraction. In any event, a sturdy peasant class, comparatively free, was the foundation of the greatness of Rome. That is the basic fact in Roman history. What next as to the fact of enormous expansion from such humble sources ?

8. Little need be said on this point after all that has been urged in principle in the foregoing pages. The ancient Romans, whatever the composition of their blood or the characteristic of their economic life, were instinctively aggressive like every other human group that ever existed. Every community is thus as a cuckoo in the nest to its congeners—it will snap up all the aliment and crowd out its companions heedless of their fate and concerned only with elbow-room for its growing bulk. Thus it is never the imperialistic proclivities of nations which require to be accounted for ; it is the relative absence of them rather which is worthy of particular note, since absolute non-aggressiveness is unknown in human history. We have therefore to picture the ancient Roman clans with the different strains in their blood becoming slowly united, probably by the forces of custom and language imposed by the whole centralising influences of the *milieu*, where uniformity was easier of attainment than in any other area of the peninsula—it being always remembered that the plain traversed by the Po was then no part of Italy, ethnologically or politically. There was probably much petty warfare over grazing rights, boundaries, and the like, and, probably, the exaction of tolls, such as the Rhine



barons imposed in the Middle Ages and the petty tyrants of black Africa insisted upon so strictly in our time, as to weigh down almost every expedition that started from the coast with the lumber of backsheesh. When a certain homogeneity had been reached in the Roman territory it became a case of expansion, not merely by way of conquest but also of compromise and amalgamation or absorption, as the case might be. For conquest the Romans not only had the best fighting material, but also a fund of generalship great in proportion to the relative mobility of their military conditions, which seemed to draw upon talent almost to the bottom of the republican scale. Thus, although no general was produced who could contend with Hannibal in the pure science of warfare, the Romans yet proved themselves invincible against probably the mightiest military intelligence that has ever appeared. Specialising in warfare as they did, there is nothing surprising in the fact that much talent was evoked in the pursuit. All races, even negroes, seem capable of producing lines of military captains of quite consistent merit. Probably no royal line had so many great military leaders as the dynasty that began with Osman the Turk, albeit, they seem to have had the wit to single out talent for their support wherever they could find it. Thus the Romans, from this particular point of view, were simply Turks in essentials, with much difference, of course, in the details of their consistent militarism. Latterly, indeed, it was provincial or mercenary talent upon which the empire relied, not merely on the military side but also on the administrative and cultural. So in Britain to-day London and the district round about supply only a fraction of the ability which keeps the machine going and adorns the manifold life of the Empire. That is an almost inevitable consequence of a growth where, so to say, the limbs may draw too much upon the heart. But it was not all conquest in the case of Rome either in its conjectural or strictly historical career. If there were forcible appropriations like that of Ireland by England there were also, probably, accommodations after conflict like that in the grudging union of the Crowns and Parliaments between Scotland and England.<sup>1</sup> Only some

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<sup>1</sup> The oligarchies not infrequently sided with Rome to save their "privileges" when the body of the people remained quite "patriotic" (Duruy, work cited, i. 354).

such theory can explain the fact that Hannibal got so little real help in Italy from the supposed victims of the ruthless Roman conquest. Among patricians and plebeians there must have been less hatred of Rome and less love of Carthage than is often supposed. Conquest, however, may have been the main note of the Roman expansion in Italy, as it certainly was in the countries without, although increments also came about in the latter peacefully, as in the case of Pergamus whose king, Attalus III, left his treasures as well as his state to Rome, even if, at bottom, it was a legacy made timeously to a burglar to prevent him obtaining by violence what could not be withheld by force. But a master-clue to the whole inimitable process of expansion lies in the fact that Rome lay in the centre of the Apennine arc which gave her the primary essential of imperial sway, that the state lay in the centre of the peninsula both geographically and strategically which gave her the hegemony of the home lands, and that the peninsula lay in the centre of the Mediterranean equally as regards geography and military science. It was this almost unparalleled combination of circumstances which yielded domination from Mesopotamia to Morocco, and from the Nile to the Clyde. Let us attempt, however, to describe this vast circle of triumph in somewhat more positive, if still summary, detail.

9. No one now believes that Rome was founded by Romulus according to the well-known story. But it is common ground that the city had its kingly period. The monarchs, however, were probably as much sacerdotal as political, and there may have been a rule of the elders or a senate alongside that of the priest-king. Probably, since it is the nature of all power to extend the scope of its authority, there was a reaching towards absolutism on the part of the potentates as the community settled more solidly into its ways of life. That is the law of civilisation. Monarchy however disappeared in Rome, but, if "Tarquin's ravishing strides" had anything to do with the revolution, it must have been more as the *occasion* than the efficient cause of the political change. Kings certainly have suffered in the past because of their licentiousness, but it was nearly always in their *persons* and without damage to their *system*, which could subsist with

no end of immorality in the wearers of the purple. In all probability, therefore, there was more behind the deposition of the monarchy than the rape of Lucrece. It has already been noted that mercantilism was seemingly a coefficient of ancient republicanism. To that, therefore, we must rather look as the seminal influence in question. Though Rome was not so commercial as many of the Grecian states nor as the Punic Colony of Carthage, she had yet sufficient mercantilism bound up with her landlordism to shape the constitution on lines that favoured the moneyed and speculative classes, who must have been largely influenced moreover by the examples of the numerous republics already in existence in the Mediterranean. In our day we have seen Brazil, whose king was exceptionally upright and enlightened, transform itself into a republic of the American type through the force of example as much as because of the subtler pressures of interest. So the Roman revolution was a modification working upon existing models intended to give ampler play to the real ruling forces which are predatory, not only as regards other nations, but also *vis-à-vis* the labouring classes in the state itself. In other words, the patricians exploited the plebeians as much as they did the foreigner. But there is nothing remarkable in that. Since wealth has always tended to concentrate in very few hands because of the acquiescence or impotence of the people, what we have to account for is not so much the main tendency as the relative popular assertiveness in any particular cases. In the ancient tillage civilisations, while there was much factiousness there was no real proletarian protestation evident until Grecian and Roman times. Why? The only answer seems to be that the total conditions (the mixture of highlander, shepherd, small farmer, merchant, fisher, &c., in diversified geographical areas) kept up an effervescence deriving from the greater equalitarianism of the primitive life which sought to perpetuate itself under stabler yet more complex economic conditions. That effervescence could not apparently subsist in the desert and monsoon civilisations, but endeavoured desperately to leaven the lump in the less massive spheres of life. It is probably to be considered a foretaste of the assertiveness of modern times which is presently

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threatening to remould society. In any event "the people" (in the restricted meaning of the word applicable to those times) had to fight desperately for their "rights," achieved them only partially, and held them most precariously. The reasons seem not too difficult to divine. For, in the long contested issue between the patricians and the plebeians, the latter had not only to fight against the solidarity of the privileged class, but still more against the instability inherent in their own ranks. The will of the wealthy few was stable in comparison with that of the impecunious many who could be corrupted *ad infinitum*, not simply by bribes but because of popular psychosis. As already stated, there is a certain truth in the saying that a radical dearly loves a lord in the sense that, as so many people covet wealth as well as position, they have more of a sneaking regard for the ranks above them, which they wish to join, than respect for their fellow comrades whom they are only too willing to leave in the lurch. The crowd has very, very rarely indeed been inspired by the single desire of elevation *en masse*. Hence one main reason for the slow growth of plebeian power in republican Rome. There were, of course, many others of importance. The blind increase of population, for instance, tended for ever to vitiate the increments attained to. Redistributions of land and a greater political pull in the councils of the nation could never remove that stone in the wound, which was kept festering to a further extent by conquest and slavery. The sturdy farmer, while absent fighting heroically for the state, might simply run into bankruptcy because of neglect of his farm, and tumble into hopeless servitude at the hands of his own fellow citizens. For the Roman law of debt was cruel indeed. Even farmers who were lucky enough to stay at home upon their acres were, in the long run, fatally affected by the tides of conquest radiating from Latium throughout the peninsula and lapping the shores of the great inland sea. There is a tendency to large estates even apart from servitude, but the crowds of slaves brought in by conquest gravely accentuated that tendency, and the "*latifundia*" were a scourge to Italy even if they did not "ruin" it, in the well-known phrase of Pliny. For probably there has been far too much declamation on that score, and the

pages of Pliny himself show that intensive culture and fertility were still features of life in his time.<sup>1</sup> *Latifundia* also existed in Byzantium, yet it persisted for a thousand years with this handicap, too readily regarded as the great fatality in Italy's case. Let the reader therefore beware of such "portmanteau-generalisations," as they have been called. Large estates, however, were a feature of the instability in Roman life manifested in that struggle of classes which fills so large a part in republican history, however obscure the details may remain and however difficult to understand, except upon general principles applicable to all history. There was also at work seemingly an antagonism between country and town where the "mean white" was a problem worsening the condition of the whole social fabric. Taking everything into account therefore the wonder is that the plebeians insinuated themselves to such an extent into power in the state. On the other hand we can, by these considerations, understand why so little was at other times achieved despite all the chances, as, for instance, when the aristocratic Gracchi headed a movement which cost them their lives, and when Marius failed latterly in his awful conflict with Sulla. It is frequently alleged that the Empire stood for a triumph as against the Senate. That may be true in a certain sense, but the people were not elevated in the measure in which the aristocratic body was depressed. A single person coveting power finds himself necessarily in antagonism to the body in which it may be diffused at the time, and which he seeks to rob of its authority. Thus the "tyrants" in Greece tended to lean upon "the people," such of them, that is, as had a free status. So did the Cæsars. And these succeeded because they were talented to begin with, and set up institutions which really ruled the Empire of which they became the head, nominally only at times if not from the very beginning. It seems really to have been a bureaucracy that wielded the power not unlike that which began in Russia with Peter the Great, and which held in thrall aristocrat, priest, and people. The elements in Roman life were probably not different in essentials from the ingredients in Egyptian, Babylonian, Chinese, and those of other nations who had preceded the

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<sup>1</sup> Coulanges, work cited.

Italian peoples on the stage of history. But they had "dreed their despotic weird" by the time they advanced to the footlights. Greece and Rome, on the other hand, are caught by the searchlight of history when they are still vigorous with the only "republicanism" known to ancient civilisation. The tendency would naturally have been towards despotism in a life that was unstable through predatoriness within as well as without, even although upon civilised lines as distinct from the barbarism of the pastoralists. The marvel perhaps is that non-aristocratic assertiveness should have relatively been so persistent and so long lived. It is that which makes the history of Rome so specially interesting, since she was the most consistent conqueror of those ages, and the popular recalcitrance she shared in common with Greece is etched upon a medium of more coherent texture and much ampler proportions. But, with the advance of the empire, Rome approximated closely to the social condition of the despotisms that had preceded her, although the variations were of course considerable. But, if we can ever speak of political evisceration, that is what happened to gentle and simple alike under the majestic façade of Roman power. But, though there may have been "decadence" in a certain sense, it alone, as has already been suggested, would never have brought the structure to ruins. And it was the western section only which crumbled before the assault of the barbarians who found Constantinople a much more difficult nut to crack, as we shall see. Meantime it is suggested that specifically Roman life in its most striking political characteristics falls to be rationalised somewhat on the lines suggested. Let us glance now at the evolution of the empire in its external aspects.

10. It has already been noted how Rome stood at a natural advantage compared with the Grecian south in its natural divisiveness, and the Etruscan north in its exposure to Gallicism. The rudest antagonists it had to face were the Samnites, an essentially mountain people who, more than once, had the advantage of their antagonists, and made them pass under the yoke at the celebrated Caudine Forks. But the men of the plains, who may be just as courageous as the highlanders, have generally far greater resources, and may readily hem in

the less well-equipped mountaineers. So Samnium was doomed in its contest with Rome, which cut it off from all its allies. Thereafter the mountaineers, despite any lingering recalcitrance, were confederated with the plainmen, even as the highlanders of Scotland, despite their imperfect reconciliation with the peoples of the more fertile plains, fought against the English at Bannockburn, and in other conflicts. The appetite grows with what it feeds on. Hence, when Rome had become dominant throughout central Italy, it naturally used its increased power in greater conflicts still, and sterilised the recalcitrance of its native victims by enlisting their energies for the plunder of the common enemy without. For, as already remarked, domestic discord is most easily quelled by imperialism even if, in the end, there may be terrible reactions through failure, and sometimes even in the midst of almost consistent success as the case of Rome exemplified. Naturally, geography determined her imperial career. There was nothing very tempting on the eastern shores of the Adriatic. The land there was so mountainous and difficult and in such insufficient *liaison* with the coast as to have made it always an area of division rather than of centralisation, and the incoherence exists in our times. Illyria, as it was anciently known, had nothing tempting for rising republican Rome, although later it was brought within the orbit of the empire because of the necessity of holding in check its barbarism and extirpating its nests of pirates. Some quite distinguished emperors too were of Illyrian stock. Similar remarks apply to Cis-Alpine Gaul, which was probably less barbaric than Illyria. But, in ancient republican times, both were countries which contained more danger than spoil. For early Rome the temptation lay in other directions in the south of the peninsula with its mixed Grecian and Carthaginian settlements, which naturally led on to attacks upon the respective mother countries of these cultures. Against Greece Rome had a comparatively easy task. The great imperialistic effort under Alexander and his imitative but quarrelsome successors had exhausted the country to a considerable extent, while the ancient divisiveness continued. Thus Pyrrhus, with the assistance of other states, gained only

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hollow victories upon Italian soil. For Rome really had greater resources in men and material, could manipulate alliances as skilfully as the Greeks, and could refine even further in the military art. The Grecian phalanx was manœuvred on to ground unsuited for its movement, and scattered like chaff before the wind. Thus Greece, divided into its Asiatic and European sections and the latter subdivided almost *ad infinitum*, could both be surrounded and penetrated by a power relatively more massive and coherent as Rome certainly was. In Carthage Rome had a deadlier rival because of greater resourcefulness and a greater cohesion backed up by military genius of the most transcendent character. Carthage, perched where the African coast juts furthest into the Mediterranean, had an even better central position in the Mediterranean than Rome itself. Her inimitable mercantilism was the index to her superiority in this respect. Sicily lay nearer to her coast than it did to Rome, and so did the bulk of the Iberian peninsula, so rich in ores then becoming of increased importance in world economy. It was quite natural therefore that the Carthaginians should have virtually made the western Mediterranean a Punic lake. It was equally natural that, as Rome developed, these two antagonists in a world governed by absolutely monopolistic ideas should first of all have fiercely glared at each other over the Tyrrhenian Sea, should have then begun fencing with each other, and, at last, engaged in a death grapple of the most epic proportions. In this struggle Carthage was bound to go under. For superior wealth has never availed against manhood, and Rome certainly was richer far in the latter respect. The city of Carthage was simply the seat of a mercantile caste which exploited the slave energy of the hinterlands in agriculture and the mercenary force of the western Mediterranean in militarism, a mercenariness which so frequently bit the hand that fed it. Rome with its still free farming class and solid geographical nucleus was at once more mobile and more coherent in its strength. Its one disadvantage lay in its maritime inexperience. But it could draw upon all the ship-building and navigating talent not thirled to Carthage. That was very considerable, and, by hooking on galley



to galley and converting the sea into a wooden platform for fighting, it made the battles as much as possible a replica of the fighting on land.<sup>1</sup> Taking all these things into account therefore we can see that only Hannibal's genius availed in that most picturesque of efforts to carry the war into the heart of the enemy's country, and that he stood worsted from the very beginning by the whole force of the circumstances, and was bound to collapse when Rome went much more easily to Carthage than Hannibal had brought Carthage to Rome. Art could not here avail against nature, and Rome's triumph can be seen to be one of the most predestinate of victories, in which however the genius of Hannibal, though limned for us only by his mortal enemies, stands out as a thing not only dwarfing his rivals, but probably eclipsing that of any other soldier in history. Probably his very failure, like that of Napoleon's, has acted like a subtle alchemy to make his name supremely memorable to posterity.

11. With the conquest of Greece and Carthage, the Mediterranean became a Roman lake. To change the metaphor, the city, so to say, became the centre of a vast spider's web along the threads of which the good and evil genius of imperialism could run at will, striking now here and now there in such overwhelming force that no section could permanently resist—tribe being matched against tribe, nation against nation, creed against creed, and interest against interest in the fashion common to suzerains since the beginning. But the reader should note how the geographical control told according to all the varying circumstances. Thus, while Egypt<sup>2</sup> was appropriated with no difficulty except in so far as differences among the Romans themselves hindered the operation, the tablelands of Persia (which were themselves a radiative centre of imperialism for the reasons we have discussed) formed an impassable barrier to Roman power, either

<sup>1</sup> The Romans became superior to the Carthaginians on sea—a reason which forced Hannibal to the invasion of Italy mainly by land. The reader should therefore be on his guard against assertions too frequently made that this ancient issue represented a conflict between "land power" and "sea power." Both forces had continental and maritime aspects, and the Romans were superior in both lines. Mediæval Italy showed that her peoples could be maritime in supreme degree, despite the handicap of no good natural harbours (Duruy, work cited, i. 497).

<sup>2</sup> The country became an appanage of the Emperor's private purse.

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because the Latin offensive was weaker than the Macedonian or the eastern defence was stronger—the latter probably being the real reason. At the western end of the Mediterranean the horsemen of Africa gave considerable trouble, but, as their oases and mountains could all be turned by the power able to aliment its strength indefinitely from the sea, north-western Africa (which probably had a moister climate than in modern times considering the ruins now lost in the desert) was also added firmly to the majestic structure of empire. It has already been noted that “Africa begins in Spain,” according to the *mot* of Dumas. The Iberian peninsula is essentially a tableland cursed with drought, with rivers running mainly in gorges and thus of little service for navigation, and with mountains cutting up the country into sections which have always fostered divisiveness. Since, however, the mountains can all be turned, the country may be centralised by any power having sufficient force for the purpose. In such a disposition of things the centre of Iberia is the natural focus of authority from within, and that is why Castille rose to pre-eminence, with the capital in the heart of the country at Madrid. Napoleon would probably have held Spain by force if he had had no other irons in the fire, and had it not been for the running sore of British sea power. In any case, the unconsolidated character of the country in ancient times gave the Carthaginians their chance, and they seem to have exploited the mineral and human resources with the utmost callousness. Naturally the country fell a complete prey to the Romans when the Punic power had been overthrown. Only in the north, where the mountains cannot be so easily outflanked, did the tribes hold out against the imperial forces, and it is notable that these same fastnesses later formed the nucleus of resistance to the Moors, and the *reconquista* radiated from them as a centre.<sup>1</sup> The Romans had probably more difficulty in France than in Spain. This may have been in large part due to the more heavily timbered character of the country which was the home of Druidism, whose cult seems to have

<sup>1</sup> Charlemagne's paladins also found these hills a difficulty, though it is probable it was no more than a scrimmage which gave rise to the romance of Roland and Oliver.

been so largely vegetational. The moister nature of the climate, and the lie of the land endow France with a fine system of navigable rivers which have always set up a tendency towards political centralisation. For the country is really a very distinct unit. Only in the north is the delimitation weak. But the Vosges, Jura, and Alps, the Mediterranean, the Pyrenees, and the Atlantic make what a French authority calls "*un beau polygone des terres.*" Naturally, France is the most richly diversified country in Europe. It has the mountain, the fertile plain, the warm southern sea, the sterner ocean, good natural harbours, and great connecting rivers. France in relation to the continent of Europe as a whole is more central and penetrable than Italy; and, when Civilisation became quite boreal in its scope, it was naturally fitted to play an even greater part in world affairs than its neighbour from whom it remains divided by the Alps but united by the sea. Though Greeks and Phœnicians had stations on the Mediterranean shores of France, the country, inclining as a whole towards the Atlantic, naturally formed part of "the backwoods of Europe" long after the purely Mediterranean countries had been won to civilisation. Naturally centralised as the country is by its grander geographical features, the ancient forests and bogs and local hill systems long kept up differentiations preventing political fusion in semi-barbaric times. Thus there were said to be a "hundred peoples" at the advent of the Romans—intimately mixed stocks whose blending has done much to enhance the Civilisation of this country, which has always been a meeting-house of the nations, first ethnically, and, latterly, in the elaboration of ideas. The Rhone led the Romans towards the head waters of the other rivers by which there could be radiation all over the land, which had then no national consciousness, though the recalcitrance of Vercingetorex showed strong enough tendencies in a common direction. In the end the country became of prime importance in the imperial economy—"the Egypt of the west," as it has been called in this connection.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that the administrative centre of Gaul was Lutetia, which occupied the site of modern Paris. The capital thus arose at the strategic point commanding the plains and river systems.

The penetration of France naturally led on to the invasion of Britain, whose forested plains and hillsides could have been held against the advance of the legions, but for tribalism smoothing a path that would otherwise have been so difficult. Only the mountains of the inhospitable Scottish Highlands stayed the flight of the Roman eagles. North-eastwards it was the forests of Germany which made them halt, not the superhuman valour of the inhabitants, as Teutonic historians so often suggest. Arminius, the great German hero who destroyed the legions of Varus, was himself completely worsted later, and the whole of Germany could have been conquered had it not been that its distance and its impoverishment made it not worth while. Certainly German mentality was not the chief barrier to penetration. Tribalism indeed there was rather accentuated in favour of Latinism. Probably more Germans fought for Rome than fought against her, and the special desire of many mercenaries was to be enlisted against their own fellow-countrymen rather than sent to distant fields of conquest.<sup>1</sup> After all, however, it was Germans who not only remained the chief thorn in the side of Rome, but ultimately brought the empire to the ground. There is nothing however the least astonishing in this, and any stock could have acted precisely as the Germans did without being credited with a special "mission" to redeem the world by degrading it as a preliminary, according to the philosophy of Kingsley, Freeman, and Carlyle, which has gone out of fashion with the world war. If the reader looks at the map he will see that Germany (taking the word in its widest sense) lies in the geographical centre of Europe. In other words she occupied "interior lines" as regards the Roman Empire, and could strike now east, now south, now west as the mood took her even in her ancient political disunion, causing the Romans (who had to operate on the rim of the circle) to be ever on the alert. It is geographical position which has made the Germans play a considerably greater part in European history than their virtues or vices quite warranted.<sup>2</sup> And, as regards the Empire of

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Annales*, xiii. 55; Duruy (work cited), iv. 284.

<sup>2</sup> It was this position which made the Germans so strong in the world war, and enabled them to hold so long at bay the superior forces of the

Rome, they might have gone on confusedly fighting as much for it as against it without fatal results had it not been that a fiercer barbarism than theirs drove them in horrid rout against the outposts of civilisation, which they bore down like frightened cattle rushed forward against barbed wire fences. The rebarbarisation of Europe, as we shall shortly see, was the work, not so much of the hosts of Germany, as of the barbarians of inner Asia brushing everything aside in the uncalculating fury of their assaults. Rome fell not because she was vicious, as has so often been proclaimed. For the eastern section of the Empire persisted though not inviolate for another thousand years, and the "vice" there was perhaps greater than in the west, but the geographical position was stronger, and that made all the difference. And it should be remembered that the Germans who ultimately accomplished the ruin in the west had themselves been robbed of veritable empires and thrones by the Huns, who looked upon themselves as the "scourge of God" against Teuton as well as against Latin. But in the eye of science the apparition of Attila can be explained upon the simple ground of predatoriness without dogmatising as to Providence one way or the other.

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12. If Rome did not begin as a haunt of brigands according to the legend, it yet developed as a state upon essentially predatory lines, its rustic aggressiveness becoming gradually transformed into the most scientific engine of exaction in ancient times. In the areas of conquest (which developed almost like circles made in a pond by the throwing in of a stone) it inclined to be repressive or destructive where civilisation was high, and constructive or evocative where culture was low. Thus Corinth was plundered and destroyed through covetousness of its wealth and jealousy of its commercial power. In those times every productive centre was looked upon as the enemy of every other unit, and must be frustrated or ruined as the case might be. Mutuality was no part of the ancient trading conception, and the

Allies. Had Germany won the war and been enabled to construct that "corridor" of her intimate desire running from the Baltic and North Sea to the Indian Ocean, she might have been irresistible not only as setting up an impregnable land barrier, but also as having equally invulnerable maritime bases in all the centres that mattered.

gain of one city or state was simply the loss of every other. Hence the doom of Corinth. It was as if London to-day could not live without the absolute destruction of New York. But it *did* dawn on the Roman intelligence that Corinth really had stood for something useful and beneficial on the earth, and painful attempts were made to build again the city, which, of course, amounted to a vote of censure on the earlier policy. History repeated itself in the case of Carthage: old Cato boiled with rage at the idea of some fruits of great excellence being produced in abundance only three days' sail from the shores of the peninsula, and so he constantly thundered "*Ceterum censeo Carthaginem esse delendam.*" And destroyed Carthage was to the very last stone and its site ploughed over with oxen. But Rome was so much the loser by her own wantonness that the very power which crushed out the alien energy tried to recreate it on the ancient site. The attempted reparation is sufficient condemnation of the original sin. If the Allies to-day after their victory were utterly to wipe out Berlin, Vienna, Sofia, and Constantinople, they would be the first to rue the foolishness of their action. Nobody of course proposes such a policy, but the suggestion may enable us all the more accurately to measure the "unwisdom of the ancients." Rome, however, stood rather for construction where existing systems did not offend her sense of the fitness of things. She reorganised Africa on perhaps better than Carthaginian lines, consolidated Iberia, colonised Gaul, debarbarised Britain, and went far to redeem Germany. With all the factiousness and corruption that were constantly at work, the process, viewed as a whole, stood apparently for much more good than evil. All the same one cannot help regretting that civilisation propagated itself so much by a violence that often went far to cancel the other benefits bestowed. But, since the constitution of human nature ordains that culture and conquest must so often go hand-in-hand, the Roman Empire is at once the most majestic and engaging structure that raises itself in the ancient horizons of history. Its consolidation round the greatest of inland seas (which has a cosmic inspiration all its own) gives it a geographical symmetry with which there is nothing

to compare in political annals. And, since the Empire earliest moulded the conscious life of Europe (which by its nature was destined to become the leader among the continents), all roads must continue to lead to Rome for the western peoples to the end of time. But the reader should be on his guard against fallacy also in this connection. Abounding native talent went to the creation of the rustic state which was to be the nucleus of one of the greatest of empires. But, naturally, provincial talent early enough recruited the forces centred in Latium, and, in the end, it was extra-peninsular ability which ran the Empire more than anything specifically "Roman." Preoccupied as the early state was with conquest and dominion, it was quite natural that art and literature should suffer as regards original assertiveness, and that what energy could be spared in that direction should be modelled upon the highly elaborated Grecian examples. But, of course, the imitative stage passed and original things were achieved, though the product as a whole may not rank so high as the Hellenic, to some extent, perhaps, because the Greeks, coming earlier into the field, pre-empted the ground, so to say, giving to the first finished expression of artistic things an air of finality which is often enough exemplified. As the Greeks ran out practically all the artistic moulds once and for all, their successors perforce have simply to go on refining mainly as to material.<sup>1</sup> Of course, as the imperialistic grip of Rome tightened upon the nations and communities, there was the "decay" in thought that always comes from such political oppression. Hence the spirit of things flagged, and there was an approximation in mentality to Egyptian and other models. It has already been remarked how Roman law was great, not so much because it was original, as on account of the necessities of the case. But unenlightened and actually stupid as it was in some of its aspects, the co-ordinations remain among the most impressive things in history, especially looking to the influences still wielded by the codes in their mummified language. In this respect Rome was a light which

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<sup>1</sup> It is often said that all the dramatic situations possible have been set for the theatre and all the love stories told for the novel, and that all that can be done now is to go on refining upon refinements.

lightened the nations. In all probability the peoples composing the empire, had Europe remained undisturbed by barbarism, would have developed into true nations—if not asserting political independence at any rate claiming and enjoying an autonomy which would have given as full play to idiosyncrasies as in the case of Canada and Australia in our time. As it was the evils of centralisation were so great that fission latterly manifested itself in the immense structure, and led to a devolution designed by the Emperors themselves, Diocletian (who was apparently a genius in statecraft) setting his seal upon reforms that made more explicit a certain antithesis between East and West—between Hellenism and Latinism—which had persisted behind the imposing façade of imperial unity. In the natural trend of civilisation northwards under Roman auspices, not only the Balkan peninsula but nearly the whole Black Sea area had become opened up to increased exploitations. The result was the development of a city on the Bosphorus on a site so naturally strategical as to make Constantinople one of the “inevitable” capitals of the world. As commanding greater and straighter land routes in connection with seaways than did Rome, there was bound to be competition between this metropolis of the east and the imperial city in the west. And the reader should note that Christianity apparently came in to sharpen the antithesis set up by secularism. It was in the east that Christianity appeared in the midst of other cults competing for appreciation within the vast circuit of the Roman Empire. We know very little as to what was the number of Christians in Constantine’s time compared with the Pagans, but it is common ground that the former were in a minority. Neither do we know anything certain about the distribution of the Christians at the time when their creed became the State religion, but it is probable they were less numerous in the west than in the east, which was alike the cradle and nursery of the creed and its heresies. However that may be, the fact that Constantine as the first Christian emperor settled his capital in the east and consolidated his creed from that vantage-point tended to make the Orient typically Christian, while the Occident remained as typically pagan. “The political



antagonism was thus sharpened almost to a razor's edge on the grindstone of religion," as someone has put it. And the antagonism was not only between east and west, but also between Christian and Pagan wherever found, and not least between the different sects of Christians themselves, who persecuted each other to the death for dogmas in a fashion that was unusual if not quite novel. And it was while the state continued to be stirred to its foundations by the insoluble problems of religion that events occurred which brought ruin upon the western section of the empire in a fashion that we shall outline in its place.

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Having parted company with Egypt and Mesopotamia as the centres of independent polities, we are now forced to new classifications and also to shorter surveys in time in consequence of the multiplying wealth of historical material. We shall therefore deal in *centuries* now to the end, and follow the apparent course of the sun from east to west in our comments and estimates, surveying "mankind from China to Peru" when we shall have "discovered" America.

*Japan.*—The Japanese themselves are doubtful if an earlier date than 660 B.C. can be assigned to dynastic government in their country. About this time, it is believed, was crowned the first emperor, Jimmu. It is alleged that he lived to the age of 137, which is not entirely credible though in line with patriarchal narratives in general, the Hindus being much more generous as regards longevity than even the Jews. Eight sovereigns who succeeded Jimmu are said to have had uneventful reigns, which would make Japan almost the only people to whom the old adage applies—"Happy the country that has no history!" It is suspected, however, that the habit of choosing a new capital at the accession of each emperor not only prevented the growth of a permanent metropolis, but also that the constant flittings played havoc with whatever records had been accumulated.<sup>1</sup> In any case nothing is set down about these hypothetically happy

<sup>1</sup> This dynastic nomadism lasted down to about A.D. 800.

rulers but their genealogies, the places where they resided and were buried, their ages, and the dates of their deaths. There are many monarchs for whose memories a similar obscurity would have been an advantage. We may, however, be justified in imagining the people developing the cultivation of their ever tremulous territory, grumbling perhaps at the exactions of their immediate superiors to whom the lie of the land gave such ample "feudal" jurisdiction, and hoping against hope for some remission from the more distant secular or sacred heads of the state. Even then, too, China, the great tutor of the east, may have been sending her intellectual influences towards the island empire, though it was many centuries afterwards that the Buddhism which the Chinese adopted was exported and transformed into the "Shintoism" of Japan.

*China.*—While there is every reason to believe that Civilisation in China existed long anterior to 500 B.C., there is no material evidence left to warrant such longevity as is ascribed to Egypt and Babylonia, while the *a priori* principles indicated at the outset point to the conclusion that the lack of evidence is due to the fact of nomadism preventing culture in the open monsoon lands long after the deserts had originated it. But a Chinese poet, lampooning a lascivious emperor, states that Heaven itself is angry with him as shown by an eclipse of the sun on a certain day and month, which our astronomers, calculating backwards by their admirably precise science, find to be 29th August 776 B.C. It is a pity this excellent point of departure is not followed up by a body of facts equally credible regarding the state of the country in the following centuries. What we seem to make out is a period of "Feudalism" following "Hunnish" incursions—the almost inevitable sequel of barbaric irruptions at all times. The period of the "Contending States," as the Chinese say, like that of Mediævalism in Europe, is full of that romance which consists in hand-to-hand combats, raids, stormings, rapes of women and wealth, and the like which are better to read about than to endure. For Chinese literature idealises the period as much as Scott does our Mediævalism.<sup>1</sup> Confucius,

<sup>1</sup> Taine's *English Literature*.

with his "paternalism" which included the emperor as the "father" of his people, seems to have stood for a centralising force in the feudal welter, and there seems to have been reconsolidation in the century in hand until anti-Confucian doctrines or "particularism" revived with "Tatar" irruptions later.

*India.*—In our last reference to India, Darius the Great was energetic in the north-west with no clear political impression that we can trace now. The "Aryan" push southwards does not seem to have been completed in this century. To all appearance there is no sign of any great consolidation apart from the Brahmanism that forces itself into the mind as the only unifying idea, however vague. "Republican" states might still be in existence alongside such monarchical government as that of Magadha (represented to some extent by the modern Behar lying south of the Ganges), where life and thought had become sophisticated to the extent indicated by Buddha's renunciation of "the world." To what extent existence even in the quondam kingdom of the "enlightened one" was modified in this century by the most portentous of all resolutions we cannot say. Perhaps it was but little, or, at any rate, not in the least comparable to the effect wrought in a century by Mohammed's doctrine "which, compared with Buddha's, is as a sack to a silk gown," as someone has said. Difficult as the idea of "Aryan" is contrasted with "Dravidian," we are yet justified in thinking that, if there may have been little ethnic advance of the former people southwards, there was considerable trade throughout the peninsula, the pearls and coral of the Deccan and Ceylon either stimulating trade or being symbols of its development.

*Persia.*—In the century in question Persia is the lion rampant of the political world. In 500 B.C. her sway extended from India and Bactriana to the Nile and the Hellespont. The Medes, who preceded the Persians in Iran, were probably a more cultured race, and weaker perhaps on that account. But the Persians, though conquering them, esteemed them greatly, ranking them always immediately after their godlike selves. The Persian rise to greatness is one of the most astonishing things in history in its swiftness. In a single generation

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a comparatively obscure race asserted its might in the Orient over polities thousands of years older than its own. What was the cause of this unparalleled development? We have already seen how the Iranian tablelands, by their central position, were specially fitted to be the seat of power, and that it is to this fact we must look for the country's unique powers of recuperation throughout the ages. But superior appreciation of warlike science appears to be a factor in the case. The bow and arrow seem to have been used with greater skill than in other nations.<sup>1</sup> The Persians overwhelmed their enemy under a hail of arrows and never allowed him to come to close quarters.<sup>2</sup> Of course methods tended to become obsolete, and the Greek hoplites proved more than a match for the Persians, who ceased to learn like all military nations. Even Napoleon after a time grew conservative. But the persistence of Persian domination is to be explained on other than merely military grounds. They were not cruel in their methods like the Assyrians before them or the Romans after them, towns being spared and kings treated with great honour, while the subject peoples were brought freely into the imperial service. They also allowed a surprising amount of autonomy to the subject nations, more than the Greeks allowed among themselves. So that Persia was not quite the "tyrant" that she has so often been called. Her supremacy indeed enforced a peace similar to the *pax Romana* later. The impartial student of history must therefore recognise that the eastern experiment was as justifiable as the western, if both indeed are not subject to condemnation from the idealist point of view. For all empire embodies an essentially ignoble conception—as much supremacy on the one side as there can be subjection on the other. And such a relation may debase the suzerain as much as the vassal—breeding mental arrogance and economic parasitism upon which no true Civilisation can be based. But we have to recognise that imperialism was the aim of all from the beginning until now, however reprehensible

<sup>1</sup> Bows and arrows seem to have been of greater consequence in warfare throughout the ages than any other weapons from the time of the ancient Egyptians down to the age of gunpowder.

<sup>2</sup> Eduard Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*.

it may be from the point of view indicated. The Persians could not be happy unless they were kowtowed to by all the nations from the Himalayas to the great sea in the west, and the beggars in Susa and Persepolis could exult equally with the king of kings as news of triumph after triumph was noised abroad in the streets, while defeats (which might really mean assertion of essential manhood on the part of some unoffending people) might bring sorrow to the hovel as well as to the palace.<sup>1</sup> Good and evil, therefore, did Persia work during the century in hand. In the earlier part of it she rolled her great but motley forces upon Greece, but suffered defeat both on land and sea by coalitions which, however, were but transient in their nature. For the Greeks were every bit as aggressive as the Persians, and, as already hinted, perhaps even more selfish and intolerant. And about 400 B.C. they were stealing a march upon Irania with ten thousand mercenaries under the banners of Cyrus, a pretender to the Persian throne.

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*Greece.*—Authorities are pretty well agreed that civilised communities were living in the Grecian islands and mainland about 2000 B.C. But the cultures seem to have been overlaid by nomadic invasions coming perhaps from interior Europe and Asia through the Balkans. Thereafter the kingly communities depicted by Homer gave way, in most cases, to the “republics” known to history which were manifestations of that mercantilism upon which we have already commented.<sup>2</sup> In 500 B.C. these republics, some of which had evolved through “tyranny,” are at the head of things in Greece with Sparta (which continued essentially landlocked and agricultural) as the mainstay of monarchy in Greece proper, though kingdoms continued to flourish further north among peoples classed as “barbarian” if also speaking Greek. The areas covered by the numerous Greek states seem very small

<sup>1</sup> A journalist watching the procession through the streets of London on the occasion of a royal jubilee overheard a beggar declare: “Canada’s mine, Australia’s mine, New Zealand and Africa and all them others that I don’t know the name of, and I ain’t got the price of my dinner to-day.”

<sup>2</sup> Of course the oligarchy might be broadly enough based upon aristocratic birth and the possession of land, but Commerce seems to have been the inspiring motive influencing even some comparatively rustic states by its “republican” example.

to our modern eyes. But size has nothing to do with intellectual greatness, and it was the competitiveness of the little communities in their different geographical conditions and under a general commercial stimulus which caused the Greece we know to etch itself indelibly on the pages of history. Comparatively benign as was the empire of Persia, it was probably a good thing for mankind that the eastern power was defeated at Salamis and Plataea. It is not possible here to retell the story of the operations which threw Persia back upon Asia Minor. But it seems that it was Greek initiative both on land and sea that won the day—the Persians were no match for the heavily armed hoplites who managed to get to close quarters and avoid such a fatal hail of arrows as shot down the “schiltrons” at Falkirk where Wallace was defeated. But, resounding as the Grecian victories must be to all time, the insensate jealousies of the states led even her famous heroes<sup>1</sup> to intrigue with the Persians, and made the oriental power a chief determinant in those early stages of European politics. Happily no incubus supervened in Greece for generations, and the Athens of Pericles burst into flower with a success only limited by our human nature. But the statesman may have got more of the credit than he really deserves—the evocative power being due to the general conditions rather than to the personality, as also in the later “ages” of Queen Elizabeth, Louis XIV, and Queen Victoria. And, enlightened as Pericles may have been, he too was an imperialist with no generalised notion of “liberty” as among sections or between states. The thing to strive for was not general prosperity in mutually fructifying effort but virtual monopoly, which was thought to be the only assured condition of the public weal. With similar ideas at work in all the divergent states we have the real explanation of the insane welter known as the Peloponnesian war, which lasted nearly thirty years and paved the way for the Macedonian, who outraged “liberty” as roughly as any Persian could have done. A good deal of scholarly wailing has gone up because of Sparta’s triumph over Athens, and the Syracusan expe-

<sup>1</sup> Themistocles fled to Persia and Pausanias the Spartan, whose guilt seems clearer, died the death of a traitor.

dition is often referred to as a "turning point" in history. The reader is cautioned against this selective method, which never can have any test in fact. The Athenian polity, with its enlarging slave basis and dwindling, factious citizenship, was no more fitted than Sparta to lead men on to greater heights of attainment. Slavery indeed, though not inconsistent with extremely high art, was a greater stone in the wound in Greece than in the older cultures, which had relatively outgrown the worst features of the system, while its incidence was worse in Athens perhaps than in Sparta. With "liberty" thus restricted and imperialism rampant, it is rather to be feared that, whoever scored most in those ancient tussles, mattered little for succeeding generations. The world indeed had to "dree its weird" before any uplift could be attained to generally. Such, at least, are the suggestions now advanced regarding a human imbroglio in a very small country which, perhaps, has made a pother altogether out of proportion to its real significance in the scheme of things because of the superlativeness of its literary setting.<sup>1</sup> Sparta did not long retain her hegemony, becoming, as might be expected, arrogant and aggressive towards even some of her old allies. Though swift retribution was to follow, the century closes in Greece with Sparta triumphant at home, and, under aggressive kings, about to push into Persian dominions from which Xenophon had just triumphantly extricated his Ten Thousand by a generalship which ranks very high in the annals of the art of war.

*Rome.*—There were kings in earlier Rome as in earlier Greece. If mercantilism was the constructive force in the shaping of Grecian "Republicanism," then we can understand why such constitutions appeared earlier in Greece than in Rome. For Greece, lying nearer the older centres, was commercialised much earlier than the Italian peninsula. Indeed, as already indicated, Rome was never so conspicuously mercantile as Athens or Corinth. But it has already been suggested that there were "republics of example" as well as of economic need. In any event, Livy's hesitating ascription of Rome's

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<sup>1</sup> The history of Thucydides which tells the story of the Peloponnesian war is the first attempt that can be called "scientific."

change of front to kingly exactions and "Tarquin's ravishing strides" are now being set down as so many "yarns." Rome probably became republican more by the examples and precepts of the many Grecian communities in the neighbourhood than because of monarchical immorality, which, as we know only too well, may be borne with to the utmost limit of human endurance, and has never made any "revolutions"—at least of a first-class order. In any event, in 500 B.C. Rome is a "republic" still threatened by the expelled monarchists working up combinations with enemies outside and friends within the walls. It was also much troubled by the strife between patricians and plebeians within the confines of "the city." While the state stood firm against monarchism the plebs made notable headway against their political enemies, who were yet their fellow-citizens. The details of the national struggle are wholly in doubt, and we are also greatly at a loss as to the facts of the internal strife and the forces at work. It is not in the least clear that the distinction between patricians and plebs stood for an original difference of *race*, as suggested by Mommsen. Such a theory, besides, seems unnecessary, in view of the very clear spontaneous tendencies to *Caste* in human society as already commented on. In view of what has already been said the difficulty rather is to keep down tendencies of this sort than to set up conditions which will generate them. Class distinctions arise under savagery as we have seen, develop under barbarism, and become full blown under Civilisation, with many variations certainly that may import distinctions without any real differences. In absolute monarchies the priest may continue to assert himself against the king, and a nobility persist despite the utmost hostility on the part of the potentate who may give preference to "upstarts" chosen for the "dirty work" of holding the aristocracy in check.<sup>1</sup> The struggle under despotism may be none the less real because it is disguised and centres round shadowy "privileges" desired or withheld. In more commercial states the struggle became

<sup>1</sup> There are very many instances of this in history : Louis XI with his favourites, Cardinal Richelieu with Father Joseph, and Mazarin with Colbert, &c., &c.



very open and pronounced, as between the Greek oligarchies and the *demos* who were "citizens" of all degrees of wealth above the slave line. The struggle may thus be one for the most trivial privileges<sup>1</sup> down to very evident protests against economic inequality. The strife between patricians and plebeians in Rome was evidently of the varied character suggested, and was singular only as to detail characteristics. Since the plebs from the first greatly outnumbered the patricians and might conceivably have carried their aims by a *coup de main*, more wonderful than the origin of the class distinction is the question why the struggle for remedies lasted about two hundred years. The answer has been fully anticipated in these pages—the relative instability of will power on the side of the dispossessed just because of their greater numbers, the lack of harmony among the plebeian sections sometimes degenerating into actual hostility,<sup>2</sup> the fomenting of such discords by the patricians solidly entrenched in their clearly defined "rights," and, perhaps most noticeably, the distractions of outside warfare deliberately engineered at times to smother down the assertiveness. Some writers, however, will have it that the slow solutions of this problem are a tribute to the "constitutionalism" of the Roman people. The writer has difficulty in agreeing. The very same tardiness was shown in other communities who get no credit for the trait, and who were perhaps less uniformly bellicose outside. And the Romans showed how violence could be used for or against constitutionalism, as when the Gracchi were slaughtered and the republic was drenched in blood through the contentions of Marius and Sulla. There is no country that has been consistently constitutional, and, though such a state of mind may be grown slowly into, it may be discarded almost in a night, as the world war has indicated in more than one quarter where violence supervened among sections long tranquil before. We have thus to conceive of early republican Rome as

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<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* the strife at the court of Louis XIV for "footstools," as a sign of superior rank in the presence of royalty.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* as when Spurius Cassius Viscellinus introduced the first agrarian law (*circa* 486 B.C.). The wealthy plebeians took sides then with the patricians, while the poorer plebeians abandoned their advocate because they opposed the "Latins" being included in the reform.

still a predominantly rustic state, with hard-fisted patricians rather callous towards their inferiors, and these plebeian artisans or farmers, hard-fisted in their turn, less taken up with a direct assault on the privileged few than with the daily hard work which was their lot, and the "fisticuffs" with the neighbouring "nations" which was their passion in the off-season, especially when harvests were gathered in and time might hang rather heavy on the hand. But progress was made alike against patrician and the enemy beyond the neighbouring hills, hated simply because he was not on this side of the mountains or the river, similar as might be his language, his customs, and his gods. For the plebeian, extorting his concessions from the ever-grudging patrician, never thought of the man on the horizon as anything but a being to be deprived of any trade he had, robbed of his grain, his oil, his women, his lands and capital city, if these were dictated by the need for Roman expansion in order to better a world regarded as "inferior." Thus Sabines, Æquians, and Volscians were fought against, and Veii, the capital of the Etruscans, was captured and destroyed. It was as if Glasgow to-day could not be content until Edinburgh was laid in the dust.

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*Japan.*—We are still in the era of Jimmu's successors with their utterly uneventful reigns. Doubtless the "savages" (perhaps the Ainu) were being fought against, and women playing a curiously prominent rôle in the warlike incidents, if we are to believe the native chroniclers who, however, wrote long after the events. There was treachery on the part of an emperor's half-brother who, in the absence of the troops battling with the savages, tried to snatch the throne for himself. We hear also of a census being taken about this time, a tax payable by women on textile fabrics and by men on game and animal skins, and the building of irrigation works and boats for the coasting trade and, no doubt, the development of the fishing industry.

*China.*—In this century the centralisation which Confucianism is held to have propped up appears to be

crumbling against the inward particularistic spirit fomented by the Tatar populations of the northern provinces. Such scurvy treatment does Chinese and Japanese history still get in western literature that this is the only scrap of information which the writer, after diligent search, can present here.<sup>1</sup>

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*India.*—The kingdom of Magadha which Buddha had renounced seems to have reached the height of its political power in this century, but the story regarding it and its still more spectral neighbours seems semi-mythical in the details. But, in this century, a very positive, nay tremendous, fact occurred in Indian history. Alexander the Great, impelled to conquest like all his kind, after having meditated going westwards to Carthage, chose out Persia after having made a footstool of Greece proper. And his genius as a general, in alliance with the still supreme efficiency of the Greek infantry, enabled him to plough his way through ruined cities and the mushroom capitals he had constructed in passing into the Indus country where his veterans rebelled. The kingdom of Magadha felt the shock. Alexander appointed "satraps" after the Persian fashion, intending thus to hold the reins if from a distance, and perhaps return to India later. In the confusion which ensued in Magadha Chandragupta (said to be a man of humble origin) expelled some satraps, and seized the kingdom of Magadha, thus instituting what is known as the "Maurya" dynasty which was later to produce the celebrated Asoka, "the Buddhist Constantine." Chandragupta is described as one of the greatest of Indian monarchs governing on an elaborate system, "army and civil service being administered by a series of boards while the cities were governed by municipal commissioners responsible for public order and the upkeep of public works."<sup>2</sup> He actually beat Seleucis in pitched battle and married the Grecian's daughter with the usual dynastic motives.

<sup>1</sup> *The Historians' History of the World*, a huge work in 25 volumes of about 700 pages each, gives about 180 pages in the last volume to the whole history of China and Japan, while India and Persia combined have only 50 pages more. *The Cambridge Ancient History* (the first volume of which has just been published) is evidently going to ignore the Far Eastern civilisations completely.

<sup>2</sup> *Ency. Brit.*, article "Chandragupta."

But he never slept two nights running in the same room, so fearful was he of assassination, that bugbear of despotism at all times and in all countries. The Grecian ambassador Megasthenes, to whom we are indebted for much information regarding the India of the time of Alexander, while noticing the caste system (which was not unknown in Greece itself) was also struck with the absence of slavery. In this respect, therefore, India could teach Greece, whose system was relatively "raw" in the sense already commented on (p. 23).

*Persia.*—The Spartans were aided in the later stages of the Peloponnesian war by Cyrus, a younger son of the Persian monarch, who held the rulership of the provinces of Asia Minor. Cyrus was ambitious and hoped to displace his brother Arsaces, the rightful heir. Suspected of treason, he was recalled by Darius to Susa. But Darius died immediately after the arrival of Cyrus, who tried to kill Arsaces at the altar during the coronation ceremony. Escaping with difficulty he returned to Asia Minor and raised an army of natives and some 13,000 Greek mercenaries. He encountered the imperial army at Cunaxa, but was slain in the engagement. His "natives" then dispersed, though the Greeks stood firm and cut their way back home under Xenophon. Had Cyrus not been killed his would probably have been the victory. But, though he might have invigorated the empire, it is not in the least likely there would have been any betterment in other than military lines yielding simply larger bouts of imperialism. But the feat of the Ten Thousand pointed the way to triumphant Spartan kings to do more than filibuster in Asia. The result was that Persia began to back up Athens after her agony, the long walls of the city being rebuilt at the expense of the great king, if only to get the better of Athenian and Spartan in the long run. Such are the crazy dances of diplomacy! Thus the Persians frustrated the earliest Greek attempts upon their empire (which was no more "decaying" than all similar factious systems), and even battered to bits a quite promising Egyptian revolt. But a menace that was to prove overwhelming arrived in the person of Alexander the Great, who, in 330 B.C., had usurped the power and place of the "king of kings." And

so the Iranian peoples too pass temporarily from the scene, although the life of the communities, deprived of any consciousness of suzerainty that did exist, might go on substantially unaltered—perhaps bettered in some respects by the lifting of what was an incubus in its very “grandeur.” At any rate since the political subjection was not to prove permanent as in the case of Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Persian growth towards reassertion might stand for what can be best in the life of any people, until it was again frustrated by the resort to imperialism specially easy and tempting to the Iranian peoples.

*Greece.*—For more than a hundred years prior to 500 B.C. small Grecian states in monarchical guise or republican form, with a very limited citizenship and a wide slave basis, had been struggling with each other for a hegemony that could not be permanently secured. In the political heavens coalitions appeared and dissolved almost with the inconstancy of clouds in the sky. We have noted how Sparta, with more or less Persian backing, gained a certain supremacy which was immediately threatened by her own acts in flouting alike her quondam Grecian colleagues and threatening Persia in the Asia Minor provinces recently violated by the Ten Thousand. In the new series of complicated wars which ensued the Spartans for a time managed to hold their own, fighting with a tenacity similar to the Iroquois in the old Red Indian wars. Then in the “heavy” air of Bœotia emerged an intelligence fighting for the city of Thebes which laid the supremacy of Sparta in the dust. Whatever doubt there may be as to Epaminondas entertaining pan-Hellenic ideas of a better type than ordinary, there seems none as to the uprightness of his character and his great originality as a general. He had excellent fighting stuff in his Bœotians, but his idea of attack *en échelon* was a real military inspiration, and, by his two famous victories, the Spartans were brought effectively to heel, even if the Macedonian phalanx was sure to have done the same thing in the end. Theban supremacy however was just a flash in the pan, and probably would have been even had Epaminondas survived the battle of Mantinea. For new and greater political combinations were forming on the Mediterranean sea-boards, which even a voluntarily united Greece could

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not have permanently resisted. Yet historians will continue to speculate as to what Epaminondas, with his high character and military genius, might or might not have done for Greece and the world had not that fatal spear entered his side, even as it is thought the youthful Hoche might have diverted the main current of the French Revolution in better than Napoleonic ways had consumption not robbed France of the general who was also the tried and tested statesman. History is full of such "might have beens." It is constantly being inculcated on the reader of these pages that, amidst all the ancient military and political hubbubs with which history mainly concerns itself, there had been obscure growth in knowledge and amenities importing advance in communities formerly entirely barbaric. Just as Egypt and Babylonia had tutored people round their borders who were to pay the debt by subjecting their preceptors, so Greece, holding the Persian at bay, was to be conquered by her own pupils the Macedonians. It pleased the southern Hellenes, though hating each other as they did, to unite in a fairly general contempt for the northern peoples held not to belong to the divine stock "lightly lifting its feet in the lucid air," as Euripides somewhere says of the Athenians. Hence the Macedonians were regarded as "barbarians" even as some Scotsmen still are in England, though admitted to possess good points despite bagpipes, kilts, and whisky. We do not know in point of fact to what race the Macedonians belonged, and there may really have been no more difference between them and the southern Greeks than between Scottish lowlanders and the men of Yorkshire. In any event, comparatively rude as may have been the Macedonian masses, that very fact might make them all the better soldiers, and the size and character of their country in the developing scheme of things afforded greater economic and human resources than any other Grecian state. King Philip too was not an unenlightened man, even if he were not always sober. He got Aristotle to tutor his son who became Alexander the Great. And "the Stagirite" certainly did not paralyse the intelligence of his pupil as he later hypnotised the minds of the Middle Ages. If Philip was ambitious so were his opponents, and no rhetoric should be able to mask the

common lustfulness from us now. But this is not in the least to take sides against Demosthenes in the Carlylean manner and "crack up" the man of action against the man of words. There would have been the fiercest opposition from Athens against Philip had Demosthenes lived and died a dummy, just as there was in other states where oratory was rather at a discount.<sup>1</sup> And had Demosthenes been "great" in action as he was in speech, that might only have stemmed the Macedonian tide temporarily. In the world of expanding ambitions and material science another turn had been reached in which the communities involved, by their vices as well as their virtues, had again to "dree their weird." It may have been something of a "political accident" that Philip, the man of talent, had as his successor a man of real genius, who made Greece imperial to the utmost bounds in a single reign, even as the illustrious Cyrus had done for Persia. But Macedonia would probably have attained to hegemony in some shape by ordinary means in the then world dispensation of things, as being on the sill of awakening Europe with all its great potentialities as already commented on. That would have favoured her chances if only for the time, and without the consistency which made Persia prominent again and again in her history with but good "average talent" at work. The same thing happened in the case of Rome when influences continued to stream westwards. Geography was backed up later by doggedness in an imperial campaign that

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<sup>1</sup> It has been pointed out that oratory may play a considerable part among such barbarian peoples as the Red Indians. It was unknown in despotisms excepting occasionally in the ecclesiastical shape (e.g. St. John Chrysostom). Grecian republicanism formed the first great opportunity for full display of the talent, and it should be considered as, on the whole, standing for greater intellectualism and constitutional freedom, easy as it may be for things to run to seed. But, since "Parliamentarianism" is the only alternative to despotism, the boredom must just be put up with. It must also be remembered that loquacity in constitutional countries is shown mainly in connection with burning questions where there is a real strife of interests in the community, in relation to which the brandished swords of soldiers could achieve no permanent solution any more than the verbosity of deputies as the Latin republics of America show. But, in matters of minor legislation, vast work may be accomplished by way of positive enactments which may have got the benefit of all the open criticism possible, and thus obviate reactions and futilities that more often adhere to the decrees of despotism than to Acts of Parliament.

persisted for more than five hundred years, until the world drift of things turned northwards. Nothing then, it is suggested, could have saved Greece, no renunciation of "democracy" nor assumption of its opposite, since the despotism of Persia went down more easily than the peoples of the Hellenic homelands. Alexander, then, was probably just another case of that genius<sup>1</sup> which lurks in all society concurring with great opportunities. He certainly made the most of these, though "luck" may have favoured him occasionally as it perhaps did Hannibal, and, more certainly, Cæsar and Napoleon. What precisely he was after does not really matter. Perhaps he did not quite know himself any more than any other great men of action who had combativeness in their minds, the *wanderlust* in their souls, and a consuming desire to remodel things according to types already existing or only imagined. Thus Alexander was the lineal successor of kings from Chaldea downward, and the predecessor of Cæsar and Bonaparte, besides being the "father" of innumerable Asiatic dynasties who proudly trace back their descent to the "Iskander" of fiction and not of fact. Whether Alexander was genuine in the obeisance he rendered to foreign gods and before alien shrines does not matter. It may have been but the merest "political gesture" calculated to conciliate enemies and not genuinely alarm friends, like Napoleon's later philanderings in Egypt. What does seem certain is, that there was far too much fury in Alexander's whole proceedings. He had not the magnanimity of the great Cyrus. His sparing of the house of Pindar is no excuse for the blotting out of Thebes, which, only a generation before, had been elevated by Epaminondas whose military inspiration was of a higher quality than Alexander's own, so far as we can now judge. Peoples whom Alexander did not utterly destroy were riddled over the world in the manner of the worst Assyrian kings. It is true he founded cities, only very few of which however were well chosen as to site and fulfilled the hopes of the prospectus. The bulk of them seem to have been "mushroom cities"

<sup>1</sup> Doubts have been raised as to Alexander's talent (Beloch, *Griech. Gesch.* iii. (1) p. 66). There is, however, no need for questioning his gifts here. Despite the "cosmic push" behind him no mediocre man could have campaigned as he did, and to ascribe the talent to unknown claimants looks like scepticism run mad.



like those by which the infamous Potemkin deluded the still more unspeakable Catherine "the Great" in her famous journey to the south of Russia. And the balance-sheet indicates that Alexander destroyed more cities than he created because of his unreasoned fury. Of all the conquerors he seems to have been most "the young man in a hurry," with no real need to be so. His conception of the "marriage of Europe and Asia" was a phantasy of phantasies. There can be no such "wedding" of continents, peoples, or even of cults. Absence of violence there may be in all human relations, but uniformity of systems should arise spontaneously under the generation of peaceful general laws, and is not to be achieved by looting capitals, razing citadels, posturing before different deities, destroying communities or mixing them up violently in a broth of irreconcilable enmities and, generally speaking, slaking over every landscape with a mixture of blood and lime coloured with the merest tincture of an intellectualism which Alexander was forswearing the further he advanced into the Orient. Conquer Persia he did in the military sense, but, more effectually still, did the system of the "king of kings" conquer him intellectually by its absolutism, its salaamings, its harems, its incense, its purple, its fine linen, its gems and barbaric gold. Imponderable as the greater human issues may be, impossible as it may be to work out evaluations of personality in relation to such conjunctions, it at least behoves us always to be critical in the ascription of "great" in such connections. And, against any good that Alexander may have done, we have to set the fact of still more tangible evil accomplished, and perhaps conclude that smaller men with less fury in their genius could accomplish more for humanity than a soldier who loved to disembowel with his own royal sword in the lust of battle against people fighting for hearth and home, who could assassinate declared friends directly in his debauches and suspected enemies indirectly in cold blood for reasons of state of which he alone was the arbiter, and all under the mask of a fantastic wedding of cultures and continents. With such a man one might readily go tiger-hunting, but his tempestuousness would have for ever frustrated or marred such reconstructions as he attempted even had the plans been fundamentally

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sound. And that we cannot say, since his conceptions stand neither revealed nor, as hazarded, could have been divulged even by himself. But something of the old barbarian may live down in the soul even of the modern pacifist, who may thus be swept along in the general current of emotion that idealises "unhappy far-off things and battles long ago." And so Alexander will bestride Bucephalus to the end of time, riding high above the *mêlée*, with perpetual youth on his brow, seduction in his curly hair, and the expiring glories of Greek intellectualism playing round the lustrous helmet surmounting the features fixed for ever on the purple east.

At what point in India the gorge of Alexander's veterans rose effectively we cannot say, but he was forced to turn back from the glories imagined on Gangetic streams and to return to the greyer realities of the west. The Grecian forces bifurcated, a portion going forward by the great Indian Ocean (then first revealed to Grecian eyes), while Alexander himself traversed the horrible deserts of Baluchistan. There was a reconcentration at Babylon, where embassies swarmed round the potentate like bees round a hive, as they did later in the time of Napoleon when he was parcelling out the Holy Roman Empire. Another expedition was being planned by Alexander, directed this time apparently against Arabia, whose desert rangers were to bow the knee, and whose spices were to be plundered at a cost that would have been infinitely greater than any rewards. But fate decided otherwise. A fever laid hold of Alexander in the height of the summer, and, in a few days, he was a dying man, with his Macedonians tramping past his pillow for a final look. With Alexander's death the political monstrosity which he had created also gave up the ghost. His generals fought over the unco-ordinated spoils in a series of campaigns so utterly confusing that even the painstaking Niebuhr, after the most exhaustive studies, could make nothing of the imbroglios. Where Niebuhr failed the writer cannot hope to succeed, and will not even try. It is sufficient to say that the natural geographical centres and rough ethnic cohesions wrought out a threefold partition which yet bubbled and heaved with interfluent waves—Macedonia including Greece proper was ruled by the Antigonidæ,

hither Asia by the Seleucidæ, and Egypt by the Ptolemies, the last the only name which may be in the least familiar to the man in the street. Thus, in the end of the fourth century B.C., the glory that was Greece thinned out into a veneer of culture covering essential despotisms which, though not unenlightened, had not the finer breath of the creative spirit which animated the politically disunited peoples of the Ionian and Ægean Seas, making them the audacious pioneers of a civilisation which can be bettered indefinitely as regards its social forms, but will remain difficult to excel in the manifold expressions of its admirable art.

*Rome.*—In the fourth century B.C. the Roman Republic emerges into the fuller light of history with increasing definition as to the general facts. But the century began with a frightful disaster, which enables us all the better to understand the destiny of Rome's northern neighbours. Mention has already been made of the fact that the Etruscans were worsted in the race for Italian supremacy by Gaulish might at least as much as by Roman tenacity. In 390 B.C. "Brennus"<sup>1</sup> and his barbarians cut a way through the Etruscan barrage, defeated the Romans on the banks of the Allia, sacked the city, but just failed to capture the capitol which, it is to be hoped, had other than wakeful geese as its protectors.<sup>2</sup> The Romans are said to have bought their deliverance by a ransom heavily weighted against them by Brennus' sword thrown into the scale. Be that as it may, an indemnity there seems to have been which, if it did not enrich the "Gauls," by no means impoverished the Romans, whose "capital" had much deeper roots than any bullion. But the "Gaulish terror" made a lasting impression on the Roman mind, though we know not what greater terrors were wrought upon the Etruscan soul doomed to utter submersion in these conflicting political tides. The Gaulish terror surmounted, the Romans turned to the ordinary or garden fisticuffs with the nearer relations, and to the struggle of the patricians and plebs, temporarily stilled in the face

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<sup>1</sup> This may be the generic word for leader rather than the chieftain's name.

<sup>2</sup> There is a growing disposition to discredit the goose story as a bit of embroidery whose very picturesqueness may be its own condemnation.

of the common foe. In the century in question the inward strife came to its conclusion with a tardiness which, among some historians, has gained the Romans a constitutional credit held to distinguish them from all ancient peoples, with the quality perhaps hardly excelled by the "Anglo-Saxon" stocks who alone, it is thought, were capable of inventing the Parliamentarianism of modern times. The writer has no wish to deny to either ancient Latin or modern Teutonic stocks the praise which is their due, albeit he is himself an "Anglo-Saxon." But he must continue to impress upon the reader that the credits claimed, even if fully allowed, are still to be accounted for more in terms of conditions than of that "racial genius" which is just an explanation of a thing in terms of itself, as sleepiness under a dose of opium is "explained" by the "dormitive virtue" of the drug. And let the reader try to be fair in comparisons that slight innumerable other communities. We know nothing about the "republican period" of the Egyptians, Babylonians, or the Asia Minor peoples, and not even too much about the Grecian states, many of which however operated as "constitutionally and stably" as the Romans—while getting little or none of the same credit for a manifestation which was not unsullied in Rome itself, and but transient even in its case. For Roman "constitutionalism" passed through the blood-baths of Marian, Sullan, and Cæsar's proscriptions into a despotism of quite Oriental deadliness, as we shall see. However that may be, the "Licinian Rogations," as they are called, mark a memorable period in Roman constitutional history. The proposals in question, in addition to encroachment on patrician officialdom, dealt with the remission of bloated interest on loans, and sought to provide that no single citizen should hold in occupation more than 500 acres of the *common* lands nor pasture upon them more than 100 head of cattle and 500 sheep, and that all landowners should employ a certain amount of free as well as slave labour on their estates—the last a sort of trade unionist attempt like the modern stipulations regulating the number of "apprentices" and excluding "blacklegs." The proposals were anything but revolutionary, yet were carried only after ten years of "bitter conflict," as admitted even by academic panegyrists. In this struggle the richer

plebeians only supported the poorer because economic baits were needed to make "the people" force open the doors of bureaucracy, which were yet to be entered only by the "swells" on their own side. While the encroachments into officialdom were not only maintained but increased until complete conquest in the interest of the higher plebeians, the poorer found that their nominal gains never really materialised, because of deliberate evasion alike by patricians and the wealthier plebeians,<sup>1</sup> and also because of the natural crookedness of economic laws. The rich grew richer and the poor poorer, with the poorest of all slithering into slavery—the slough of despond from which the older cultures of Egypt, India, and China had then practically struggled free. But, before 300 B.C., the formal struggle between patrician and plebeian was ended, and then the united people was free for the task of expansion, viewed as divinely ordained, which was to involve the overriding of constitutionalism in every other direction and the economic bleeding white of other peoples, patrician and plebeian alike. In the wars that filled up the latter half of the fourth century B.C. the Samnites stand out as the chief opponents of Rome. They were the hillmen and shepherds of the central Apennine ranges who had aforetime sent down colonies into the rich Campanian plains. These settlers so far forgot their origin in the "degeneracy" engendered by their wealth as to ask the expanding Romans to secure them from the raids by which they had made their own fortunes. So Rome intervened with a better excuse than was always available, and the parties went at it hammer and tongs, with the advantage by no means always on the side of the Romans. The Samnites indeed, just because they were highlanders, were the "toughest" enemies which the half-highland Romans were to find in the peninsula. But the Samnites, just again because they were pure highlanders, had neither the resources in men nor money that the more lowland state could command.<sup>2</sup> So, although the Romans suffered a terrible disaster at the celebrated Caudine Forks, it became a losing battle

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<sup>1</sup> Licinius himself was fined for evading the law bearing his name. He had put 500 acres into the name of his emancipated son (Duruy, *work cited*, i. 303).

<sup>2</sup> As before remarked, highlanders, though great raiders, never could be formidable conquerors because of the lack of resources due to their *milieu*.

for the Samnites, whose hill positions were all being turned as this century ends, with Rome soon to be victor in peninsular Italy.

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*Japan.*—Whether we are still supposed to be in the time of the already mentioned eight sovereigns of uneventful reign the writer can neither affirm nor deny. After dredging about in many directions for months the only thing he can find to note about Japan in this century is the legend of a great earthquake in 286 B.C., “when Mount Fuji rose and the Biwa lake was formed.” The geologists, of course, have a different story to tell.

*China.*—There is much more to get a grip of in the China of this era. The old Chow Dynasty was brought to an end by the nagging of the anti-Confucians and pro-Tatars. Then the Ts’in Dynasty, as it is called, was founded. The usurping king got hold of the Nine Tripods, or bronze vases symbolical of the various divisions of the empire, without which he could not have declared himself the “Son of Heaven” and alone parley with the Almighty. In 246 B.C. Shi-hwang-ti came to the throne at the age of seventeen. He is known as the “first universal emperor.” He abolished the feudal system which had emerged on the decay of the old centralised empire. He made roads, formed canals, and constructed numerous and handsome buildings. Having established internal order, he turned his attention to the Tatars in the north-west, from which stocks he himself may have sprung. He pulverised those whom he found in China and drove some remnants into Mongolia. Then he set about building the Great Wall, said to be the greatest collection of earth and stones on the planet, going up hill and down dale in bold, if straggling, fashion. To what extent it was a real defence in earlier times is not clear, though it seems to have been ineffective latterly. It is said that every third man in the empire was conscribed for the labour which was perhaps more willingly rendered than is sometimes hinted at, since the wall stood for a very positive, if monstrous, defence against the greatest of all menaces to civilisation—Nomadism. So the Great Wall of China remains as the symbol of the grandest oppugnancy known to history—that between

"the man with the horse and the man with the hoe—the conflict between the saddle and the plough." Shi-hwang-ti is famous in another way. Literate as China then was perhaps compared with all the world beside, the emperor was shocked at the conservative influence of the scholarship of his time and the reverence of the crowd for "the good old times" as depicted by poets, pedants, and lawyers. He therefore determined to break with the past in a fashion attempted by no potentate before or since. He decreed the destruction of all books relating to the past with all its "fancy Feudalism." Some scholars who refused to yield up their volumes were buried alive. Since the decree offended the folklore susceptibilities of the crowd as well as the interests of the officials, booksellers, *et hoc genus omne*, it was not a success, and the emperor incurred much odium. Rebellion broke out at his death, and his dynasty perished under the assaults of reactionary generals, one of whom, Kao-ti, made himself emperor. Curiously enough the only decree of Shi's which he did not revoke was that relating to the books, for he also seemed to have dreaded the *litterati*. Han having been his native state, that was the name given to the Dynasty founded by him in 206 B.C.

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*India.*—Chandragupta died about 297 B.C. He was succeeded by his son Bindusara, who is said to have extended the kingdom down to Madras. Then, in 272 B.C., Bindusara's son came to the throne—the ever famous Asoka. He also seems to have extended the kingdom, until it included the territory represented by modern British India excepting Burma. But from being a conqueror, Asoka became a Buddhist missionary without, however, renouncing his throne or the world like his master. Mildness and persuasion seem to have taken the place of arrogance and force, and an experiment without real historical parallel appears to have taken place, since Constantine seems to fall far in the rear of Asoka both as to personal merit and propagandist authority.<sup>1</sup> In *may* be that Asoka

<sup>1</sup> The habit of calling Asoka the "Buddhist Constantine" rather puts the cart before the horse. Constantine was over five hundred years behind Asoka in time, and ruled over fewer people and with less acceptance than Asoka. It would be more sensible then to talk of the "Christian Asoka" than of the "Buddhist Constantine."

was swayed politically like Constantine, but, although only some thirty-five of Asoka's rock and pillar inscriptions survive out of many thousand memorial columns, and only about 5000 words of his gospel remain, his is, in its way, the most imposing figure that ever adorned a human dynasty. "If a man's fame," says one authority,<sup>1</sup> "can be measured by the number of hearts who revere his memory and the lips who have mentioned, and still mention, him with honour, Asoka is more famous than Charlemagne or Cæsar." But, powerful as Asoka was and vast as were the subsidies he supplied to the religion he preferred, it is doubtful if the older Brahmanism gave way to any substantial extent, since the capacity of the Hindu mind is so great as almost to accommodate doubt as a cult in itself. Asoka died about 226 B.C., and his dynasty did not long persist, collapsing under a semi-barbaric push from Bactria, followed by another "Scythian" irruption which overlaid Indian culture as with a tide of mud.

*The Post-Alexandrian Empires.*—Unsatisfactory as finished imperial despotism may be, whether it is that of a single potentate like Asoka, Cyrus, or Alexander, or that of the Roman republic before the Cæsars, the orotundity and simplicity of the system have the saving grace of easy comprehension by the reader and readier exposition by the writer. The contrast is thus very striking in turning from the contemplation of Buddhist India under the far-ranging and beneficent activities of Asoka to the political state of things prevailing from Persia to Greece. The confusion that marked the wars of Alexander's generals has already been commented on. All attempts to tell the story of the "Diadochi" can only result in the piling up of "sand-heaps of incident—on which no flowers of dynamic thought can ever bloom." As already noted, however, a rough threefold division manifested itself in the welter—the Seleucids, the Ptolemies, and the Antigonids. The Seleucids, based on the more easterly ruins of the Persian Empire, had to fight for their existence from the very first, not only against the menace of Asiatic barbarians, but also against native recalcitrance and the active hostility of the Ptolemies and the western Greeks generally. To

<sup>1</sup> Koppen.



what extent Hellenism impressed the whole Nearer East we cannot say. We are ignorant as to how many Greeks may have drifted into the vast quadrilateral forming the old Persian Empire. But, considering that the whole Greek race in Europe and on the maritime fringes of Asia Minor never can have been great in number because of the mountainous nature of their locations, the Hellenic influx must have been but as a drop in the bucket compared with the mass-weight of the natives. In all probability the intellectual impression was far greater than the ethnic, since "ideas may expand in the open air while blood coagulates." At any rate, Greek "cities" in the Seleucid Empire have a lamp-light glow more fervid than in the older historical perspectives. But their activities may only have stood for so many galvanic shocks of the Hellenic battery, while the culture generally may have been a mere spreading of phosphorescence over the face of things. The native stocks, at any rate, seem to have been almost wholly irresponsive, sinking apparently into a passivity which did not necessarily spell social worsening, compared with the blind activities of the old imperialism never to be effectually renounced. In many cases, indeed, the quiescence may have stood for real advantage to the more sheltered communities no longer conscribed for campaignings to the very ends of the earth. In any case the student interested in the national life that runs below the political and dynastic turmoils may more profitably pursue the lines of thought indicated than be greatly concerned with the course of military campaigns or the fates of potentates more than usually the sport of factions. It should however be noted that, before the century was out, the Seleucid Empire had been momentarily overrun by the Ptolemies, and menaced still more portentously by the Parthians in the east. The Parthians were another Iranian stock, kindred in blood to the Persis, if with more barbaric ingredients, and "young" in political assertiveness, if aged enough tribally. The future was really to them and not to the Greeks in the Iranian tablelands commanding the old Mesopotamian plains and the gateways of Asia Minor.

In the sections devoted to principles in these pages it was suggested that, although Civilisation might be as old in

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Mesopotamia as in Egypt, yet the former cultures perhaps led more unstable lives because of the less cloistered nature of the country. This relative protection may have availed for Egypt in the days of the earlier Ptolemies, since things were stable with them at least compared with the Seleucidæ, who were harassed from Egypt with the greatest gusto despite the "Hellenism" of both dynasties, vaunting themselves superior to the "effete" Orientalism which it was the Greek mission to rejuvenate. "Enlightened" the Ptolemies may have been, relatively speaking, trading valiantly in the old protectionist way, and sending corn as far as Rome, which must have been paid for in some way, and would not therefore have the corrupting effect of the ship-loads of tributary stuff later dumped on the Tiber in imperial times. In the imperialistic line, however, the Ptolemies were as unenlightened as their neighbours and rivals, and the old rainbows were chased westwards along the African coast and north-eastwards among the mountains and deserts of Asia Minor, with every "glorious" feat of arms ending in the frustrations and humiliations that the search for suzerainty always involves in the end.

In the Macedonian or Antigonid Empire, as it shrank up after Alexander the Great, there was perhaps more confusion than in the Seleucidæan. For there was a far greater criss-cross of political forces in the west because of its lingering "democratism" causing events to grow into and out of each other like branch and root in the gnarled woodiness of a mangrove swamp. In Greece, however, there was one great redeeming feature of the situation. The federative idea had often enough perhaps been present to minds in pre-Macedonian Greece, but every attempt at free and equal alliance was shipwrecked on the shoals of selfishness. Leagues, however, of a better kind supervened in the reaction from the Macedonian debauch, and the reader is advised that the constitutionalism embodied in the Achæan and Ætolian Leagues was more significant for the country than the picturesque but ineffectual attempts of Pyrrhus in groping alliance with the Carthaginians to stem the tide of Roman advance in Italy. As already mentioned, much speculation has been indulged in as to how the whole course of history might have been altered if Alexander the Great, instead of

going east, had gone west, as he seemed inclined to do at one time. This is another of these engaging "might have beens" in which the imagination can riot without end. The present writer is of opinion that, had Alexander conquered as effectively westward as he did eastward, capturing Carthage and even forcing the capitol of Rome, it would hardly have mattered a straw in the long run. There was no great permanent effect eastward despite victory, and there would have been as little in the Occident had Alexander reached France and Spain, whose coast peoples long had heard the speech of the Hellenic traders competing with their Punic rivals. It must always be remembered in this connection that the world was advancing in science if more in the realm of matter than of mind, so far at least as the discipline of class and imperial passions was concerned. Under this world-development old centres of political power were as absolutely condemned to lose their ancient political influence as new rivals to attain to a sovereignty whose character and duration would depend upon all the climatic, geographical, ethnical, and economic conditions determining the situation as a whole. Enough has already been said to indicate what a commanding position Rome held under the developing dispensation of things, and the arguments formerly advanced can now be brought to bear upon the conclusion that Pyrrhic "victories" of later times are simply an intensified illustration of the barrenness that Alexandrine conquests would have resulted in earlier. In other words, nothing but a world-alliance, then utterly impossible, could have prevented Rome, or rather Italy, from conquering that inimitable Mediterranean of which she was the natural centre. Macedonia was conquered by fate rather than by Rome.

*Rome.*—In the beginning of the third century B.C. the Romans were still struggling with their chief antagonists the Samnites. But, in 290 B.C., the mountaineers were finally defeated, admitted as allies, and their force utilised to advance all the designs of the centralising power, though recalcitrance lingered on after 290 B.C. and spluttered out on occasions in later generations. With the clearing out of the Samnites, Rome was free to advance south to the toe and heel of the Italian peninsula, still largely

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Grecised and with King Pyrrhus coming from the ancient homelands to prevent the conquest of what was once "Magna Græcia." His nominal victories, which were substantially defeats, have become proverbial, for he, too, was fighting against a force inherently stronger than anything else in the Mediterranean of the time, though still lacking perfection in some points of military technique. With Italy conquered, it was next the turn of Sicily, the great island-base of Carthage. Though the Romans had everything to learn in naval warfare, they ultimately became sufficiently adept to meet the Carthaginian fleets and beat them hollow. The first Punic war, as it is called, lasted however for twenty-three years (264-241 B.C.), and threw up no great general on the Roman side, while Hamilcar's brilliance on the Carthaginian side could not save his cause from defeat. For three years afterwards Carthage fought what is known as the "Inexpiable War" with her mercenaries, during which Rome stood by without taking advantage of the situation, whatever the reason. While Hamilcar Barca was preparing to fight Rome through Spain, the Romans were subduing the Cis-Alpine Gauls, who were utterly defeated at Telamon through lack of discipline and good equipment. It is said that the large Gaulish swords were so badly tempered that they bent under the blows, and, when the barbarian stooped to straighten the weapon with his foot, the short Roman sword finished its deadly work.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile Hamilcar Barca was in Spain with the youthful Hannibal sworn to everlasting enmity against Rome, and, through lack of native cohesion, building up a province which was to be the jumping-off ground for the most picturesque campaign in military history. For, reprobate war as one may, Hannibal's feat in crossing the Alps and taking Rome in the rear and fighting almost invincibly on hostile ground for fifteen years is perhaps the most astonishing feat of genius of its kind that ever has been witnessed. We have already indicated the causes of Rome's dearly-bought

<sup>1</sup> It was said that the Gauls would have won but for the badness of their weapons (Duruy, i. 514). See Oman's *Art of War*, p. 486, for another illustration of specially defective equipment causing complete havoc on the weaker side.

triumph and need not repeat them now.<sup>1</sup> Before the end of the century in question Hannibal was not only back in Africa, but finally defeated in the battle of Zama (202 B.C.), and Rome was assaulting Macedonia.

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*Japan.*—There is not even a ghost of a legend, so to say, to set down regarding Japan in this century, and we can only imagine that the hairy Ainu are still being pressed upon throughout the peninsula, fishing develops along with agriculture, and Feudalism perhaps increases rather than abates as the Japanese lords supersede the Ainu tribal chiefs.

*China.*—In our last section on China we left the usurper Kao-ti discountenancing the *literati*, even like his most original predecessor Shi-Hwang-ti. Hwei-ti, who reigned from 194 to 179 B.C., reversed the policy of his predecessors, giving every encouragement to literature upon the old lines. He appointed a Royal Commission to restore the ancient texts. And it would seem that much fancy and some actual forgery were involved in the reconditioning of the hoary structure. The Han Dynasty seems to have made head against the barbarians to such an extent that eastern Turkestan became a Chinese colony, and relations, however feeble, were being linked up with India, then not quite blocked off by the "Scythians."

*India.*—In this century Indian history, painfully reconstituted from scraps of western literature and native coins, shows potentates reigning in the north-west bearing the names Demetrius, Eucratides, and Menander. The last is presumed to have had a long reign, as he appears young upon some coins and old upon others, though worry may have aged him prematurely, or the artists may have been unskilful. It is often suspected that about this time Buddhism, despite its subsidy by Asoka, began to dwindle under a Brahmanical reaction. On the other hand, the "Indo-Scythians" who came thundering through the north-west passes in this century perhaps caught up the Buddhist creed to some extent, and passed

<sup>1</sup> See before, p. 140.

it along their lines of communication to the peoples of central Asia.

*Post-Alexandrian Empires.*—In this century the realm of the Seleucidæ is still all commotion, like a gigantic iceberg heaving and tumbling about in the open water before it finds its centre of gravity and settles into the currents making for the open sea. The racial, political and dynastic movements are perhaps more complicated than ever, and cannot now be followed except as regards two features. The Parthian menace continues in the east, and in the south-west the Jews, who had been living suppressed for centuries, assert themselves transiently under the Maccabees as a protest against the Hellenism forced upon them under Antiochus IV, the king of Syria. But for the instability within the greater kingdoms themselves it would have been impossible for the Hasmonæans (so the Jews themselves call their protestant dynasty) to have asserted themselves as vigorously as they did. Despite discord and treachery in the Judean rank and file the rebellious movement was remarkably successful, and it may be true, as claimed, that, under Simon Maccabæus, Israel was happier than at any previous time in its post-exilic history. Taking everything into account, the Jews may well be proud of their Maccabees.

In Egypt the Ptolemaic Dynasty, though perhaps having its best king in Philometer, manifests on the whole potentates of a worsening type. One, Euergetes, is said to have been a frightful creature, "delighting in deeds of blood, his body as loathsome in its blown corpulence as his soul."<sup>1</sup> But it is also said that he had the steady support of the native population, which, as before remarked,<sup>2</sup> can stand a great deal of royal immorality. With Rome beginning to put her finger in the Egyptian pie, to claim complete appropriation was only a question of time, just as it had been in the case of Greece. There the Roman maxim *divide et impera* had been carried out with brilliant success. Before the end of the century the powers that Rome had "protected" in Greece to gain her deeper ends had disappeared in company with the so-called enemies of the Roman State. Democratic

<sup>1</sup> *Ency. Brit. Art.* "Ptolemies."

<sup>2</sup> P. 156.

Athens, kingly Sparta, imperial Macedon, Ætolian and Achæan league—all were gone ; Corinth had been pillaged to its cellars and rude Roman soldiers <sup>1</sup> had given it to the flames in the same hours as Carthage was destroyed and the ploughshare turned upon its ruins.

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*Rome.*—In this century the Republic, by its conquest of Carthage and its encroachments on Egypt and Asia Minor, virtually made the Mediterranean a Roman lake. That is the great outstanding fact of the era. It but remains to work out certain details not already anticipated in preceding sections. With Hannibal defeated and out of the way in 201 B.C., Rome could consolidate and continue conquering at the same time. So the work went on in the north of Italy among the Gauls, among the Iberian peoples, never civilised as the Greeks had been, and in Greece itself in more and more heavy-fisted form, “rebellions” being made excuses for taking away any semblance of freedom that remained. The right thing for a half-subjected nation to do is to quench aspirations after its ancient freedom and appear perfectly content with the fragments that remain ; otherwise the result will be utter and deserved deprivation. Such is the philosophy of Imperialism. In this fashion was overlaid the barbarian republicanism of Italy and Iberia, the sophisticated mercantilism of Carthage, and the cultures of Greece embodying the only democratism known in ancient times. The question never was asked whether the general scheme of things might not afford a place in the sun for every nation and that they might enrich each other in wealth and ideas under a co-operation that was radical and essential despite apparent conflicts on the surface. “These people are not our people, their speech is not our speech, their ways are strange and their gods are alien, therefore let us subject them to our plans and our desires, since it is intolerable they will not acknowledge our superiority which is our warrant for destroying them

<sup>1</sup> Mummius, the Roman general who conquered Corinth and destroyed it, may have been less inhuman than the senators who instigated him and were only intent upon the utter removal of a commercial rival. But Mummius was certainly no connoisseur in art—his instructions to those who shipped off the priceless treasures of Corinth being that, in the event of damage or loss, “they must be replaced by others of equal value,” as if the articles were so many loads of hay.

should we judge it just." And the philosophy is by no means renounced to-day, though it may masquerade in a verbiage of diplomacy. In the close of the war with Hannibal, Scipio became the great figure on the Roman side. In the Third Punic War the most striking figure was not so much the general who won it as the old sinner who instigated it. This was Cato "the Censor," as he is called. He was of the plebeian farming class, energetic, avaricious, opinionative, "dour," though upright according to his standards. He hated luxury like the very devil, ruled his wife and family tyrannically, inculcating economy with unction, and giving "tips" as to how to palm off ageing slaves on other masters before they became quite useless—in short, a "get up in the morning early man and keep ahead of the others all day; a Samuel Smiles before his time," as someone has said. In intellectual matters Cato was what might be called an "auld licht," loving the ancient ways because of their simplicity and rudeness and hating advancing Hellenism with all the vigour of an extremely sturdy soul, albeit the wave of innovation carried even him beyond his bearings, since, at the age of eighty, he found himself forced to learn the Greek he had denounced without in the least understanding it. Cato's political economy was that of his age—to wit, that one nation's prosperity was another nation's loss, and the rival must be destroyed at all costs. This delusion, however, he raised to its highest power. Heavy as seemed the hand that Rome laid upon Carthage after the defeat of Hannibal, the spectacle was witnessed of the Punic city being even more prosperous commercially than Rome herself, even as France was more prosperous than Germany after the indemnity of 1871.<sup>1</sup> In 157 B.C., that is nearly fifty years after the battle of Zama, Cato went to Carthage as one of the deputies sent to arbitrate between the Carthaginians and the Numidian king, who were then at odds. Cato seems to have been "struck all of a heap" at the signs of Carthaginian prosperity. Apparently he took little or no account of the fact that the lustier sunshine

<sup>1</sup> To-day Germany, the indemnity-paying nation, is also the only apparently prosperous one on the continent, with other manufacturing nations sunk in unparalleled depths of unemployment.



of North Africa could produce fruits incapable of ripening in the northern Mediterranean, and thus afford Carthage a market which competed essentially with no other.<sup>1</sup> That did not matter: the prosperity was there; and, although Rome was also "thriving" prodigiously, it was essential that Carthage should be wiped out, and the sooner the better. If Peter the Hermit were insistent as regards the recovery of Jerusalem he was nothing to Cato in the crusade he preached against Carthage. Therefore, wherever the Censor went, and whatever the subject, *Delenda est Carthago* got into the conversation as inevitably as King Charles' head into Mr. Dick's memorial. So destroyed Carthage was, although Cato, murdering Greek upon his deathbed, did not live to learn that heavy oxen were furrowing in the cinders of the hell that he had helped to make. Had his philosophy been singular nothing but execration could attach to the memory of a man like Cato. But, alas! he was only more vocal than the crowd and more honest than his fellow-statesmen who later passed judgment upon the common crime without recognising it as such. Twenty-four years after the destruction of the Punic city, whose site had been dedicated with solemn imprecations to the infernal gods, the Romans themselves, finding that, after all, Carthage had stood for something essential in the general economy, painfully started rebuilding, and a prosperity was re-established that was found really to minister to the eternal city without militating against its power. Since Corinth was also rebuilt and repopled by the race of its destroyers, and to the general benefit, we can see with what little wisdom the world was governed then as now.

Genuine as may have been the joy over the double victory of Corinth and Carthage in Roman hall and by plebeian hearth, and even in the *ergastula* where the slaves were nightly penned, the essential hollowness of the

<sup>1</sup> Cato's protectionism may perhaps have had the same basis as the deputation from the fruit-canning industry which waited on an American President in order "to have a duty clapped upon bananas." On the President remarking that the States did not grow bananas it was pointed out that, if free imports continued, the eaters of exotics, getting "fed up," had no appetite for the native fruits. So any stick is good enough with which to beat the Free Trade dog.

imperial process was demonstrated in this century, not only by the rebuildings and repeoplings just referred to, but also by two significant if sinister movements—one in Sicily (which was the first Roman province) and the other in the very capital itself. There is a tendency to large estates in all countries and all conditions of society above the purely nomadic. In pastoralism, with its relative unproductiveness, the holding must be of considerable size if it is to support anything of a family, while sheiks may add domain to domain in a way that signifies dispossession of families or clans and may cause distinct rural proletarianism in rude enough communities. Agriculture, especially of an intensive kind, tends to reduce the size of farms, since the family cannot profitably till more than a certain number of acres. But any ancient distribution upon the family basis<sup>1</sup> constantly tended to be upset by quite ordinary human greed. Hence large estates, pastoral or agricultural or implying mixed farming, seem to have existed in all nations as their history opens, and it was a constant struggle to preserve small holdings however they had been instituted. Even in France the law of succession just manages to keep intact the system created by the Revolution. The island of Sicily, early exploited by Greeks and Carthaginians, lent itself to capitalist exploitation upon a slave basis earlier than in the more rugged and less fertile peninsula where "family individualism" lingered. Submissive as slaves are by nature, as already commented on,<sup>2</sup> the Roman conquests, by sending into bondage men of culture and initiative, set up a fermentation unusual in the servile ranks. To some extent, perhaps, the rising which broke out in Sicily in 139 B.C. was due to the introduction of this new leaven in an area where cruelty was specially pronounced. In any case, an insurrection broke out which spread all over the island, and was not suppressed until after desperate fighting which lasted for seven years, many slaves in the end slaughtering each other rather than be captured or killed by their masters. In Italy

<sup>1</sup> There never has been any real "Communism" in land, as before noted (p. 25), and the family is a category in the midst of the German "Mark," the Russian "Mir," and the Scotch "Runrig" system.

<sup>2</sup> See before, p. 14.

itself a still more significant movement came to a head in 133 B.C. Tiberius Gracchus, though of bluer blood than Cato, had a sympathy for the oppressed which the Censor never exhibited. He, too, regretted the "good old times," but in a different way from Cato, who had a preference for pasturage as against tillage or mixed farming.<sup>1</sup> This was part of the Censor's wrong-headedness. The old free farmer who raised some corn and oil as well as sheep and cattle was the man, above all, who deserved "protection" from the corn of Sicily as well as of Carthage. But that was not afforded, and ranches manned by slaves began to take the place of the peasantry in the very act of their conquering the world, and largely because of their very success in so doing. It is a comment upon the famed "Licinian Rogations" that Gracchus could do little better than demand their partial reapplication to the effect of again limiting the size of holdings—showing to what an extent the laws had either been evaded from the first or rendered nugatory by economic "law," or rather drift. It is also remarkable that the vaunted Roman constitutionalism gave way completely in the attempt to decree, not something revolutionary, but rather mildly reactionary, and, further, that it was not "the people" who instituted illegality and force but an idealistic aristocrat on the one side and his very realist "swell" opponents on the other, who began turning their semblance of a Parliament into a slaughterhouse at need. Though Tiberius had "the people" distinctly on his side, he ultimately failed piteously for all the reasons already advanced regarding crowd psychology, and also because Gracchus' movement was not well timed or organised. For his Italian allies were too busy in their harvest-fields to vote down the parasite rabble of the city when the time came. So, after a seven months' agitation, the idealist, whose social science seems to have consisted in a forcible turning back of the hands of the clock instead of cutting out the imperialist cancer, perished in the midst of his peers, with his brains battered in by senatorial benches or stools used in the affray. Ten years later Gaius Gracchus took

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<sup>1</sup> He is said to have graded things thus: "Good grazing, tolerable grazing, bad grazing, corn growing."

up his brother's policy on somewhat enlarged lines,<sup>1</sup> but was again out-manceuvred by the Senate in alliance with the Roman mob, which grudged the extension of the franchise to their Italian brothers who never had had a vote and were now also rapidly losing their homesteads. Gracchus and his colleagues, foreseeing bloodshed, proclaimed liberty to all slaves who should join them. In vain, for it is much more difficult to rush men into liberty than to train them to subjection. In the very heart of Rome, and under the leading of her most aristocratic men, the Senate became a mob for the time being and joined in a tigerish hunt for blood. So Gaius Gracchus, who turned his sword upon himself, joined his brother in the shades.

It was left to a democrat of a different stamp to enlarge the scope of the popular demands, and thereby to provoke aristocratic reprisals which plunged the Republic into tumults as bloody as anything in history, and in which any "constitutionalism" which had ever existed foundered completely. This "democrat" was Gaius Marius, a man of low birth but of high military talent, who gave the Roman army its professional stamp, thereby increasing its efficiency in certain main directions, but making the empire in the end a dropsical body with a factitious soul which no tappings or purgations could ever cleanse or cure. Marius came into prominence in the war against Jugurtha, who was the illegitimate son of a North African potentate and had usurped the throne of Numidia. This kingdom had been a pawn against Carthage. Jugurtha, who was in the closest touch with the Roman soldiers and statesmen, divined their venality. By skilful corruption of generals and senators he long turned everything in his favour, quitting Rome, to which he had been summoned, with the words "A city for sale and doomed to perish as soon as it finds a purchaser."<sup>2</sup> The city indeed came to be for sale, but was not to perish as Jugurtha prophesied. Despite wholesale corruption

<sup>1</sup> One of the laws brought forward by Gaius Gracchus was that corn should be sold to purely Roman citizens under cost price, the loss being borne by the treasury. So doles, apparently sanctioned by custom, became statutory, leading to the corruption ever since deplored.

<sup>2</sup> Livy (Epit. 64).

a system can go on indefinitely of its own social momentum, however halting, in the absence of an external force sufficiently strong and uncompromisingly barbaric such as wiped out Nineveh completely, but reconstituted Carthage and Corinth in repentances as blind as the earlier destruction. So Rome persisted, despite the corruption of which Jugurtha was the first famous external exponent. When the war against him threatened to eternalise itself by guerilla tactics like those of De Wet in our time, Marius got Jugurtha into an ambush, and led him in triumph through the streets of Rome to that subterranean prison or "bath of ice" under the capitol in which the king of Numidia was strangled or starved to death, his gold having become impotent against the refractoriness of the more popular enmities in Rome. But Marius was to achieve a far greater triumph than that against Jugurtha, who owes his importance in history less to his own talents than to the genius of the historian Sallust. The hinterlands of Europe ceased not to breed barbarians lured like moths to the cultures whose lights burned all round the Mediterranean shores. Cimbri and Teutones, whom we now hear of for the first time in history, after apparently campaigning about on the Danube, in southern France, and northern Spain, heavily defeated incompetent or jealous Roman generals in the northern gateways of Italy. The Teutonic terror now seemed to be as formidable as the Gaulish one of long ago. But Marius showed what could be done by science against brute force and barbarian courage. In 102 B.C. he overwhelmed the Teutones and Ambroses at Aquæ Sextiæ, some twenty miles north of Marseilles, and, next year, overthrew the Cimbri on the Raudian plain, about midway between Milan and Turin. "The battlefield of Aquæ Sextiæ is said to have been so fertilised by the amount of blood and corpses that, in the following summer, it bore an utterly disproportionate crop of fruit: the neighbouring Massiliots fenced their vineyards with the enormous bones of the slain."<sup>1</sup> While the first statement is plausible, the second is more picturesque than credible. Marius was hailed as the "saviour of his country" and was accorded a triumph of unprecedented splendour as

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<sup>1</sup> Stöll, *Geschichte der Römer* (founding on Plutarch).

the soldier who had risen from the ranks. But, while Rome was thus rejoicing, Sicily was a second time in the throes of a servile revolt which lasted from 102 to 99 B.C., with such relative humanity and discipline shown on the side of the slaves as to indicate that both rank and file may have included many men formerly free as well as educated. Thus, while the *pax Romana* which was being established might imply fresh ameliorations for many included communities, novel corrosions were also operating on the growing structure of empire despite the burnish of every victory, whether achieved towards the Levant, on the burning sands of Africa, or the mountain passes of the central Mediterranean.

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*Japan.*—There is still nothing positive to record about the island empire of the east, although there may be much that is worthy of annotation. So we are still including Japan in the roll-call of nations in view of future events because it has figured significantly already, like the famous French soldier whose name was constantly called and the uniform answer given from the ranks “Died on the field of honour!”

*China.*—The Han Dynasty is still in power, consolidating itself so solidly in Turkestan that, it is said, caravans could pass with merchandise and bring back goods, treasures, and artistic things from the markets of Persia and Rome, now getting confounded in their activities. The Chinese, then, are active far beyond the monstrous bastions erected by Shi-Hwang-ti, with the nomads tamed, if only temporarily—perhaps held in check more by an epidemic of tribal wars than by this counter-offensive of the agriculturists, which is very remarkable, however transient.

*India.*—The Brahmanical reaction is supposed to be going on in this century in the midst of Scythian interventions, even as, some five hundred years later, the European barbarians plunged into the struggles between Pagan and Christian in the Roman Empire and between the Christian sects themselves, which, if less compre-

hensible, were even more violent and dangerous as regards any meddling with them. What were the ebbings and flowings between Buddhism and Brahmanism in India we can never know, though there was possibly far more "astucity" than bloodshed at work. A native Sunga Dynasty (whose founder, Pushyamitra, is said to have persecuted Buddhist monks), after lasting for about a hundred years, came to an end about 72 B.C. It was succeeded by a Kanva Dynasty, which lasted only forty-five years, *i.e.* till about 27 B.C. Then, it is stated, an unknown king of the Andhra Dynasty of the Satavahanas came from the deltas of the Godavari and Kistna and pushed northwards against the Scythians—spectral potentates all with wraith names, like so many ancient kings figuring in history by their appellations alone.

*The Near East.*—Since the phosphorescence in the empires succeeding Alexander was rapidly dying out, it becomes more appropriate to treat the cultures lying between the further east and the Roman Empire under the heading now employed. We have seen how, about 255 B.C., a "Parthian" Dynasty fastened into the flank of the Seleucid Empire. Nomads as the Parthians may have originally been, like the Persis before them, they became "Iranised" rather than "Hellenised," and remained a thorn in the flesh to the Seleucids struggling ever for their existence. When Rome had shaken herself free from Hannibal she immediately dealt some rapid blows, not only at the Greeks, but, more forcibly, at the Seleucids, whose never well-based empire crumbled under the shock. Territory in northern Asia Minor was forfeited and given to the little kingdom of Pergamus, which was thereby aggrandised. It stuck to the Romans thereafter like a burr, and when a king called Attalus III died fifty years afterwards (133 B.C.) it was found that, by his will, he bequeathed his whole kingdom to the Romans. Probably this was a perfectly genuine and voluntary act on the king's part, but it *may* have been but an astute move to forestall an international burglar in the interest of the folks condemned to stay on in the house. The citizens, at any rate, acquiesced in this bequest of their lives and fortunes, thankful perhaps to purchase peace

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at any price in those distressful times.<sup>1</sup> How essentially sentimental and unscientific was the campaign of Tiberius Gracchus (in the time of whose ascendancy this succession opened) is indicated by the fact that Gracchus proposed to appropriate the treasures of Attalus III to purchase stock and erect farm buildings for the peasants who were to be replanted on Italian soil. This was robbing Peter to pay Paul with a vengeance—not a thought being given to the natives whose labours had produced the wealth in question. Though this is but a sidelight on Roman expansion, it indicates to what dreadful passes even the best minds were being driven. The immediate purpose in hand, however, is to indicate how, in the century in question, the Near East was faring between the Roman hammer and the Parthian anvil. Nearly all the nations that lay between were thrust like bars of iron into the fire of world-politics, and either fashioned according to desire, or distorted by conflicting blows, or, perhaps, cast as rubbish to the void. It is impossible here even to outline the still excessive intricacy of the events in the old Seleucid domains. It can only be noted that while Armenia, under King Tigranes, rose to a certain domination it had no secure base either in the facts of geography or ethnology, and was bound to collapse in the very nature of the case, as already indicated.<sup>2</sup> The same advice is tendered to the reader as regards the portentous figure of Mithridates, the king of Pontus. He was a king on the Jugurthine pattern, courageous, strong, skilful with every warlike weapon, a great rider and hunter, an athlete with a Gargantuan appetite, but withal a scholar and the master of no less than twenty-two languages, and yet could assassinate right and left, with so little security, however, as regards his own person that he is said to have so saturated his body with poisons that none deliberately administered by others could do him harm. A happy life *he* must have lived ! Mithridates achieved so much success in his chronic crusadings against

<sup>1</sup> There seem to have been some revolts in the countrysides if not in Pergamus itself. Those of us who to-day may wonder that such *mortis causa* dispositions should be possible, even in ancient times, ought to ponder over the fact that recent treaties of peace have made dispositions *inter vivos* in which the peoples assigned had practically no say in the transfer.

<sup>2</sup> See before, p. 110.



Rome that it is sometimes speculated he could have "altered the course of history" if this or that had happened or not occurred. Another historical "might have been"! But it is certain that things could not have been improved by an Oriental potentate more stiffly asserting himself against western "republicans," however conscience-proof. But the point is that Mithridates had, at bottom, no stabler means for empire than Tigranes, and foundered completely for like causes. All the greater facts of geography and psychology willed that nothing could permanently stand between the strongest force based on Europe and the power with the best hinterlands in Asia. So Rome and Iran were to grapple for centuries until the arrival of the Mohammedan wedge, whose significance will be accounted for in its place. With Rome advancing due eastwards for all the reasons indicated, it is evident that her success would tend completely to "side-track" Egypt, whose Ptolemaic Dynasty, bastardised in 80 B.C., died out with Cleopatra in a blaze of voluptuousness such as the world has never seen. Thus, in the first century before Christ, the history of the hinterlands of the Near East as well as all the marginal countries of the Mediterranean blends into the general record of Rome.

*Rome.*—For Rome the century before Christ stands for the long agony of the Republic. It is one of the most interesting eras in history. The scene is immense, stretching from Babylon to Britain, and it is crowded with actors some of them the most striking that ever trod the stage. A whole volume could be filled with guiding ideas alone as regards the events that, for us now, close the chronology of Paganism and open up the calendar of Christendom. It is evident, therefore, that only the quintessential features can be dealt with here, but always in terms of principle. Since man cannot but live in communities necessarily marked off by space and the thousand-fold distinctions of habit, the ideal form of government would be direct control in a communal assembly of adults which would include women as well as men. Still judging from the ideal standpoint, no action should be taken but by the common consent of such a community. For a mere majority has no

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“natural” or logical right to impose its will upon a minority—it being really true that “there is nothing divine in the counting of noses.” It is just an expedient to escape the embarrassments of that vetoing of all action sanctioned by the *liberum veto*, which was *not* a Polish peculiarity, as too many people think, but a common enough feature in political society. Some of the “republican” communities in India still practise it, and it was also in vogue among the Crusaders. But the ideal has always been roughly overridden by the real. Thus women have been disfranchised since the beginning of the human family, while, even in savage and barbarian societies, a few individuals might lord it despotically over the crowd. Rough equality *might* exist under pastoralism, but tillage became the signal for wealth to begin concentrating in the fewest possible hands, and power to filter through a disdainful nobility into the person of the monarch whose word was law, even if he also had to respect the intangible force of Custom. We have seen how mercantilism tended to transmute despotism into a “Republicanism” which might patronise art in freer forms but exploit the economical situation with more craft and less humanity even than kings. The Roman Republic, similar in kind if differing in detail from the Grecian instances, was established under circumstances of which we are ignorant. But it stood essentially for government by the few, who grudged every concession to the “many” and undermined every nominal reform. Stern, efficient, uncorrupt the Roman government may have been as long as certain conditions lasted. But it could not remain so indefinitely if, in the widening conflicts of interests, duplicity might “pay” better than rude honesty and frankness, and power and wealth became chief prizes in a struggle of devil-take-the-hindmost. That, of course, is what happened under the advance of the Empire, when corruption seized upon the rulers wholesale and the people, by whom the victories were wrought, could do little permanently to better their conditions in the horrible scramble because they were so largely frustrated by their own imperial appetites. Again and again the hour and the man seemed to have come, but the blows struck were mostly in the air, or neighbour

found himself warring against neighbour through incapacity to single out the essential enemy in the hopeless *mêlée*. In this state of things the Roman Senate might have lasted for ever had the job of governing a world not simply become too big for its diffused and ill-defined authority.<sup>1</sup> For, though power also inhered in an assembly, magistrates, &c., the Senate, taking on capitalistic hues, remained the governing factor in the situation, despite the simulacrum of "plebeian" advance. But the disease of empire invaded the very heart of the Senate itself, members latterly hating and betraying each other for wealth or power, or because of disputes over spoils. Only a dictator could have brought order into an aristocratic assembly so inspired. But that would have meant the end of the authority which the governing body had so long abused. Hence the Senate's enemies really became those of its own household. The plebeian Marius was to fail even as the aristocratic Gracchi did. But, though the "saturnine Sulla" propped up the rotten structure for a time, it fell not only under a more coherent assault of city plebeian and Italian provincial, but, more particularly, through the designs of senatorial adventurers—the proud, disdainful and insincere Pompey, who acted apparently through pique, and the indomitable Julius Cæsar, "the penniless lad with the long pedigree," who, if he were ambitious for himself, seems to have been also sincerely on the side of "the people," and determined that they should obtain what his kinsman Marius and his intellectual forefathers the Gracchi had failed to bestow. Cæsar undoubtedly was a genius, and his forcefulness perhaps abbreviated the struggle with the now demoniac Senate. But change was inevitable all the same, much or little as it might imply for the Roman peoples and provincials. And, indeed, it was Augustus, the man of cautious talent, who shaped the destinies of the state, even as wiliness rather than genius told later in the struggle of the French kings with the nobility, which was just an "incoherent Senate." Such, in briefest

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<sup>1</sup> In so far as foreign affairs had ever been under the control of the people they completely lost touch therewith as matters became more and more complicated. In the end the general complexity was too much for the divided and corrupt Senate (Duruy, ii. 48).

outline, is the principle of elucidation here suggested as regards the agony of the Roman Republic, which yet, like a monstrous devil-fish, had so many tentacles fixed round the body politic that it almost crushed its victim to death in the desperate process of disengagement. And let the reader note how tortuous was the path from Senatorial supremacy to imperial despotism, which was the only alternative that could apply. Marius the soldier seems to have been little of a statesman, despite his political ambitions. He was the Moreau of his time, first-rate in the field, but halting and ineffectual in the council, especially with Bonapartes about. Marius met his Napoleon in Sulla. Sulla was a real aristocrat with a pimply face, very debauched it is said, but extremely energetic otherwise, as such men often are. He was much more of a statesman than Marius, but a whole-souled reactionary. And, if Julius Cæsar's genius must have counted for something in expediting empire, Sulla's earlier intervention must have counted for something in prolonging the older state of things by the "accident" of his very conspicuous talent. Sulla had been associated with Marius in the Jugurthine war, and, since the Numidian king had actually surrendered to the aristocrat, rival claims for the credit of ending the war were preferred on Sulla's behalf. Since soldiers are proverbially jealous, and their differences often most acute in the face of the common enemy, it is probable that Marius and Sulla would have quarrelled on technical grounds alone, apart from their politics coloured by differences of descent. In any event, the jealousies materialised with frightful results in the social arena. In 91 B.C. the tribune Livius proposed that the Roman franchise should be extended to the Italian Allies, who richly deserved it. The proposal incurred all the old hostility, and Livius was slain by the "Constitutionalists." But, on this occasion, the disfranchised themselves sprang to arms, Samnite septs, still nourishing their ancient grudge, drawing the sword with other imperfectly reconciled clans. Marius and Sulla were both called upon to assist in the suppression of the "rebellion." Since the plebeian soldier must have been as half-hearted as the aristocrat was sincerely energetic, there is no wonder it

was Sulla who stamped out the rising. But it was a Pyrrhic victory for the Senate. Just as the Duke of Wellington in the early nineteenth century judged that the House of Lords could no longer resist an enfranchisement, then dreaded as "revolutionary" but now deemed extremely moderate, so the Roman authorities, despite their military triumph, made the very concession which, gracefully granted, would have saved all the bloodshed of the "Social War," as it is called.<sup>1</sup> Of course, cramping restrictions were enforced and any amount of inequalities left. So, despite the concessions, and to some extent because of their unjust incidence, the confused struggle continued, bringing the hosts of Marius and Sulla into the most bloody and cruel struggles ever seen in Rome. Mithridates, king of Pontus, was rampant in the east. Marius, who was a "democratic imperialist," coveted the command. So did Sulla, the uncompromising aristocrat. So the cohorts split over the complicated issue and flew at each other's throats. Whatever the reasons, Sulla worsted Marius, who, hero as he was, had to fly for his life, and was hunted as a wild beast as far forth as the ruins of Carthage. So unstable are political things! Sulla went up to Rome from the stricken Italian fields and acted as the first self-appointed military dictator. The Senate applauded rather than objected, since the intervention was wholly in their interest. But a precedent had been created which, later, may have influenced Cæsar in crossing the Rubicon. Sulla then went eastwards, acted masterfully in Greece, but was so hampered from home that Mithridates could not then be brought finally to book. In Sulla's absence the partisans of Marius were busy in Rome, and the old soldier took advantage of a favourable turn of events to return to the city in triumph. The terrible murders and proscriptions that ensued were probably less due to his instigation than to his political incompetency. But in any case "the people" had now improved upon the old precedents set up by the Senate itself. Marius died in the midst of the carnage, weighed down, probably, by its very ghastliness. Then Sulla returned, and a still more terrible hacking-off of heads and burglary of lands and treasures

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<sup>1</sup> Duruy, work cited, ii. 576.

took place. He "reformed" the constitution with the idea of making it revolution-proof in the future. And it seems he displayed no little sagacity in the character of his legislative schemes. He might have put considerable stiffening into them had he remained long enough in power as "perpetual dictator." But after a short time he abdicated and died, in a fit of anger it is said, though his debauches and campaigning hardships may have had more to do with his demise. The assault upon his constitution immediately began, and not unsuccessfully, but with imperial and domestic distractions on every hand. Spartacus the Gladiator began what Voltaire calls "the only just war in history." The figure of Spartacus, at any rate, is of that essentially heroic type which tends to float clear of all contemporary malignity, however artfully applied. He is greater far than his conqueror Crassus, whom we would now justly dub a "profiteer" of the worst description, making money, apparently, out of every kind of speculation. Crassus, it seems, was the man who financed Cæsar in his desperate financial straits. These two, in alliance with Pompey, formed what is known as the "First Triumvirate," the chief counterpoise to which was Cato, the great-grandson of the "Censor," and the famous Cicero. The latter was one of the world's greatest orators and the first conspicuous lawyer-politician, who, however, has had no end of successors. Senatorially inclined as Cicero was, he was yet considered an upstart by the higher aristocracy, and he failed completely to make the middle-class parties the determining element in the state. But he achieved a huge triumph against the Senator Catiline, a man wealthy in lineage but utterly impoverished financially, and pictured to us as only anxious to repair his fortunes by the revolution which he intended. We have only the terrible indictment of Cicero and Sallust to go by, and it leaves us with a sense of hopeless criminality on the part of the man we can still see shrinking contumeliously in the Senate before Cicero and lying dead upon the battlefield with a hellish grin upon the features of the corpse. There *may* be another side to the picture,<sup>1</sup> but it is to be feared that Catiline, unlike Spartacus, will

<sup>1</sup> See Beer, *Social Struggles in Antiquity*, p. 147.

remain overwhelmed in the lowest depths of the historical inferno. It is impossible here even to sketch the manœuvres by which the Triumvirs settled the parts they were to play in the developing drama of Rome. Crassus went east and, through his own pigheadedness apparently, lost both his army and his life in the eastern deserts, while the Roman standards for long decked the walls of Parthian palaces. Cæsar went to Gaul and Britain, conquering with a mastery which probably his books do not in the least exaggerate. Pompey, who should have gone to Spain and Africa, stayed on at home and swung to the side of the Senate in Cæsar's absence, following his real inclinations doubtless. The result was a complete "polarisation" of the whole situation, the opposition being roughly between the Senate and Pompey, who had conquered pirates and principalities in the east, and "the people" and Julius Cæsar, who had conquered even more conspicuously in the west. Then ensued one of the most dramatic "moments" in history. Cæsar crossed the Rubicon murmuring the words that the stream of time will bear on for ever, "*Alea jacta est*" (the die is cast). At his approach on Rome, Pompey fled to the east, where his military reputation was strongest and where he evidently judged the best stand could be made. The Senators who backed him fled like a flock of frightened geese in a manner which makes them compare badly with their ancestors, who calmly confronted the Gauls in their curule chairs. But the Sullan proscriptions, it was thought, would provoke a terrible Cæsarean revenge. To the general surprise, there was a display of conciliation rather than of cruelty. With almost incredible energy Cæsar followed up Pompey and completely defeated him in Greece at the battle of Pharsalia. Pompey fled to Alexandria, but was slain on the beach as his boat touched the shore. So Cæsar, following in hot pursuit, found his enemy dead, but a new friend, Cleopatra, all too much alive. He had a *liaison* with the Egyptian queen, which *she* said resulted in the birth of a boy, Cæsarion, though it might be difficult to believe such a woman even under oath. In any case, Cæsar wasted time in Alexandria and came near losing his life in the brawl which had, as a result, the burning of the library at Alexandria.

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Struggling free from the embraces of Circe, he dashed into Asia Minor, defeated the son of Mithridates, clearing up the situation with the celerity vouched for in his famous "*Veni, vidi, vici*," which is almost the only Latin that anybody carries over from school-days. Then he proceeded to stamp out the smouldering embers of the conflict, the battle of Munda in Spain being reckoned as the act which left him "master of the world." He returned triumphantly to Rome with magnanimity in his mien, but ambitiousness in his acts in gathering to himself the functions as well as the symbols of royalty. Then the Senators, goaded to madness, plunged their daggers into his heart. Cæsar fell at the foot of Pompey's statue muttering "*Et tu Brute!*"—words which also will never lose their resonance. Shakespeare says that Cæsar was "the noblest man that ever lived in the tide of times," though we cannot say that that was the dramatist's own personal opinion. In any case, it may be called an extravagance. Magnanimous men had long preceded Cæsar, while *constructional* geniuses of a higher order must have existed both in the realm of mind and matter. Fate condemned the dictator to destroy rather than create, and when the daggers found his heart he was looking eagerly forward to an assault upon Parthia, which would have signified fresh destruction. A reformer he certainly was in some degree, but his creative designs remain nebulous, and, bountiful and beneficent as he may have intended to be, it could only be on despotic political lines, which have never yet made life the orderly, prosperous, stable, yet largely untrammelled, thing it could be. Able and versatile as Cæsar was, it would have been a pity for the world if greater men than he had not "lived in the tide of times."

The assassination of Cæsar immediately called from the now vasty deep of Roman politics the "Second Triumvirate," as it is called. It consisted of Lepidus, Cæsar's master of the horse (who was to cut no figure in subsequent events and may here be dismissed with the mere mention of his name), Mark Antony, and Octavius Cæsar, the grand-nephew of Cæsar, who is better known as Augustus. Mark Antony is somewhat similar in his character to the Grecian Alcibiades who brilliantly but



erratically played many parts during the Peloponnesian War. In both characters there was a good deal of what to-day might be called the "bounder." Augustus was built on different lines. Despite his youth, he seems to have been one of the shrewdest politicians that ever took up the task of government. Indeed his tranquil talent did more to shape the Roman state on lines as stable as any despotism can be than perhaps his more brilliant grand-uncle could have done. The Triumvirate was successful in stamping out the senatorial "rebellion," Cicero, Brutus,<sup>1</sup> and Cassius all perishing in the conflicts. Then, however, differences of opinion supervened, as was not only natural but inevitable. Mark Antony, taking the east as his appanage, was, like Cæsar, drawn within the orbit of Cleopatra's charms, but never spun quite free from the fatal circle. Octavius went eastwards to combat the designs of the potentates whose combined voluptuousness has created the most purple patch in all the horizons of history. It was a naval battle that decided the fate of the competing dynasts rather than (as it is too often put) of "the world," which manages to jog along pretty much on the old paths, despite battles reckoned as "decisive" of human destinies as a whole. Cæsar's navy was smaller than that of his opponent's, and it seems doubtful if it really were gaining an advantage, when Cleopatra suddenly broke off the engagement and sailed away, with Antony following his mistress to their common doom. Cleopatra, with the superb effrontery which was her forte, apparently expected to subdue Octavius to her desires as she had the greater Julius. But when she realised how glacial was his mind and how desperate were her own prospects, fearing that she might only be spared to grace the conqueror's triumph, she cut short her voluptuous life in the building she had designed for her tomb, but whether by the asp's bite remains a mystery. The majesty of Shakespeare's verse and the ecstasy of Tennyson's lines are only signs of the evocative power the last Egyptian queen has continued

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<sup>1</sup> It is suggested that Brutus is a much overrated character; he was a money-lender who charged 48 per cent., while his devotion to the Republic seems to have been of the "fanatical" type that excludes all breadth of vision.

to wield over the minds of men. Her lubricity and misfortunes combined have elevated her even above Helen of Troy in the *chronique scandaleuse* of the past, with Mary Queen of Scots as almost the sole great competitor in modern days. Human nature is such that these dishonoured among women may still enthrall with an intensity of which virtue seems hardly to hold the secret.

And still in dreams men mount Egyptian ships,  
And feel a queen's warm kisses on their lips.

The victory of Actium made Augustus master, not of "the world," as it is too often put, but of the Mediterranean nations, which even then represented perhaps but a fraction of the human race.<sup>1</sup> For it is well to avoid what are apt to become mere catch-phrases in history, and to keep everything as far as possible in just perspectives, which are often distorted by the relative abundance of the literature of the Roman west. With much astuteness and considerable luck Augustus established a political stability to which Rome had long been a stranger, and the emperor, besides winning the loyalty of the peoples whom he ruled, earned the respect of distant and unsubdued enemies. The Parthians restored the standards captured in the victory over Crassus. And literature conspired to crown the glory of Augustus. Lucretius, because of the manliness, freedom, independence, and vigour of the thought displayed in the poem which is the only "scientific epic" extant, if not the only one ever composed, may represent the purest gold of Roman thought. But, even if that were allowed, the contributions of Virgil, Horace, Livy, and the rest stand at least for an "Indian summer" of beauty, if the inimitable tints imply decay rather than a noontide in the nation's life.

### THE FIRST CENTURY

(A.D. 1 TO 100)

It should perhaps be noted here that the method of reckoning from the Birth of Christ did not come into

<sup>1</sup> The Roman Empire at its greatest extent might never include more than seventy million inhabitants. India and China must have had greater populations, with probably far fewer slaves.

vogue until centuries after the supposed beginning of the Christian era. And Christianity as a world-force advanced very slowly compared with the advent of Mohammedanism later. The world indeed was long to remain pretty much in the state we have seen it through the centuries we have so rapidly traversed. Once more, therefore, let the reader endeavour to maintain the just perspectives of the case.

*Japan.*—In Japan the kings in this century began to lead less heroic lives than Jimmu, the first emperor, who headed his hosts in battle. They did not, however, become quite so sedentary and immured as in later ages, making “progresses” through their dominions, we are told, which might be anything but welcome to the inhabitants thought to be favoured, since, in despotic countries, the king’s visit was sometimes as desolating as a barbaric invasion or a visitation of locusts. Bribes were sometimes given to divert the advance at all costs into other quarters.<sup>1</sup> About this time also the art of wrestling, which later became of such tremendous importance in the life of the nation, may have started on its career. Women, too, still seem to be of importance in the affairs of the State, while local beauties were apparently picked out for the harem in the “progresses” above referred to.

*China.*—The Han Dynasty is still in power in China, although it was to suffer a certain amount of dislocation. About A.D. 1 a certain Wang Mang rebelled against an infant emperor. Successful at first, his oppressive acts led to his defeat and decapitation, his trunk being torn to bits by his infuriated soldiery. A Han prince of a different branch then succeeded to the throne, and inaugurated what is known as the “Eastern Han,” or “Later Han,” Dynasty. It seems to have been a progressive period, for which the potentates, as usual, get most of the credit, however little some of them may have deserved it. The Chinese in the north still call themselves “The Children of Han,” so proud are they of a dynasty popular even yet with the people. Buddhism seems to have been introduced into China in this century, and was to receive a welcome greater than in its native

<sup>1</sup> Antoninus Pius, the successor of Hadrian who had “progressed” restlessly over the Roman Empire from end to end, purposely abstained from “progresses” in order to save the expense of such peripatetic rule.

country, however debased some of its forms might become. Countries included in or next to Turkestan were also linked up with the Chinese Empire and seem to have prospered as a result, even as did many provinces in the Roman Empire in the same century. For China, which was a great Civilisation long before the emergence of Rome, kept ahead of the empire in many ways. Thus while, in the west, the emperor, or the bureaucracy that began to gather round his person, could pick and choose functionaries at their own sweet will, China had already invented the examination system, which made career freer to talent perhaps than anywhere else in the world until but yesterday. It must be repeated that Chinese originality is a most remarkable thing as well as the massive persistency of the culture. For China, despite terrible invasions after the first Christian century, was to remain the least affected by resurgent nomadism, so solidly were the national foundations laid in this prosperous and inventive era.

*India.*—In this century Hindustan becomes more deeply folded in barbaric mists, and its history is only to be “envisaged” by reference to scraps in Chinese history and the terribly defective evidence of rare coins. Perhaps, however, it is true to say that the Chinese push into Central Asia, tending to send the nomads south-westwards, was partly the cause of the invasion of India. Thus the imperial activity of one Civilisation tended unwittingly to the blight of another.

*The Near East.*—In the beginning of the Christian era a semi-independent kingdom of Armenia keeps floating about in the political currents, much buffeted, as formerly, by the rivalries of Rome and Parthia. The latter empire, over and above Armenia, is the only thing that, in this era, engages the eye between the further east and the Levant. But, though Parthia was powerful, it was a loosely constructed empire compared with its Iranian predecessor or successor. It remained a semi-nomadic state, mounted bowmen being the mainstay of its armies. A favourite device of the Parthians was to attack and retire as if beaten,<sup>1</sup> then suddenly to re-form in overwhelm-

<sup>1</sup> Arrows might still be shot backwards while on the run. Hence the expression “Parthian shaft.”

ing force against the disjointed enemy and annihilate him. Against a steadfast infantry and at close quarters such tactics were unavailing. But, frequently as the Parthians scored, there was no such consistency of imperial push as with the Persians, or with their contemporaries the Romans. In winter the Parthian armies seem to have been practically disabled, so greatly did the moisture relax their bowstrings and render their shafts ineffectual. Had the Romans taken full advantage of their opportunities, Parthia might have come down with a crash instead of continuing to be the great thorn in the flesh it was for centuries. But, as we shall see, Augustus had become chary of extending the bounds of empire, perhaps influenced by the prayer attributed to Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal.<sup>1</sup> He therefore contented himself with the return of the standards captured from Crassus. So Parthian suzerainty continued with native well-being perhaps but little interfered with in the twenty provinces nominally subject to the leading state. It is probable, however, that in this century a more or less purposive anti-Hellenism defined itself, intent upon complete assertion against the still partially Grecised stocks of the old Seleucid Empire.

*Rome.*—To the peoples of Christendom in our day the event which overshadows everything else in the reign of Augustus is the birth of Christ. But it is well to bethink ourselves how inconspicuous the event was at the time in its world-setting, even if there was commotion among Bethlehem's shepherds by night and spicy tribute rendered by Magi from the east. The Jews, despite the Maccabæan flash in the pan, had long been a feeble folk as a political unit, if a subtle enough problem in their dispersion because of their commercial versatility and ineradicable religious "fanaticism," as it was viewed. They were not the only oppressed people who were looking for a Messiah<sup>2</sup> whose attributes might merge into the supernatural, in regard to which only poets like Lucretius and statesmen like Julius Cæsar were sceptical. The attitude towards life

<sup>1</sup> Instead of asking, as Censor, that "the gods should increase and magnify the power of Rome," Scipio said, "I pray that they may preserve it, it is great enough already."

<sup>2</sup> The Mazdeans had also Messianic views, as expressed in the *Vendidad*.

inclined to the miraculous generally, and was not confined to the valley of the Jordan. The Scriptures themselves bear witness to the competition that was going on for popular credit by manipulations that were intended to impress as miracles. And it lies on the face of the case that, whatever overwhelming claims the founder of Christianity might intrinsically possess in this regard, his creed established itself to begin with on an obscure and narrow foundation in Palestine, gaining perhaps relatively less support in the land of its birth than Buddhism in its, but conquering as conspicuously westwards as did the earlier system in the east. It is only the ostensible features of the new and slow development that can be dealt with here, even as in the case of Buddhism. For specialist handling the reader must turn to the numerous volumes treating of the "historicity" of Christ, the alleged borrowing of Christianity from Mithraism and other cults, the authority attaching to Gospels and Epistles, the part played by Paul in the shaping of the creed, the influence of women and slaves in forming seed-beds for its propagation, and the general influences, psychological as well as economic, which made up what has been called "the radiative environment of the cult." The writer has nothing special to offer beyond the bald suggestion that Christianity, however august its claims, having to work through human beings who continued "mostly fools" despite their faith, had to share in the struggles and join in the compromises and employ the subterfuges inseparable from our common human nature, the creed being moulded and remoulded under influences that seem cosmic rather than sublunary, and meeting with an acceptance that has not yet proved universal, and probably never may.

Though Augustus may have hesitated about the indefinite enlargement of the Roman Empire, it was impossible in the work of consolidation not to continue advancing at some points. Hence northern Gaul, with its ill-defined border, called for a push north-eastwards in search for that "scientific frontier" which may never quite materialise. It resulted in the one great military disaster of Augustus' principate. Varus was led into a trap in the "Teutoburg forest," and his forces were

annihilated by Arminius. We do not know where the forest in question was, despite an immense literature on the subject, mainly in German. But the Teutons are unanimous in regarding Hermann (or Arman or Arminius) as the "first national German hero." It is not worth while grudging any people its foundational characters. But eulogy is apt to become utterly extravagant. Probably not a single drop of German blood to-day derives from the Arminian tribe, nor a single root-word in the language. And to talk of a frontier barbarian, in an inchoate land where the hero had more enemies among his kin than on the Roman side of the Rhine, as having "inaugurated" or "asserted" German independence only indicates the terrible straits to which all peoples are put as to national beginnings. Nations are not "made" or "started" by Hermanns or Boadiceas, nor by any warlike stroke from tribes more incoherent perhaps after the display than before it. They are made by the travail of the communities in the assertive work of peace. The Romans could have gone far enough forward into Germany had it really been worth while to annex endless stretches of forest, bog, and heath. In point of fact the Romans soon avenged the defeat of Varus, whose old camp they encompassed in the victories from which "Germanicus" derived his title. And the Germans did not effectually pass the frontier for centuries, and then only when forced on by a barbarism greater than their own. What is to be said of an historical philosophy that extols nation-making, but absolutely ignores the fact that more Germans fought on the Roman side than ever tilted against the legions, while the preference of the mercenaries was to encounter their old compatriots rather than confront new foes against whom there were no old tribal scores to be wiped off? Arminius himself, whose wife and son were made captive by the Romans, died in the midst of obscure flockings and fightings of German kites and crows. But history is more a thing of predilection than of logic, and the fancy of the gloomy Teutoburger Wald will ever link up with the cry of the potentate in his sunny but stricken southern home, "Varus, give me back my legions!"

Augustus died in A.D. 14 full of honours, dignities, and

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powers such as no man had ever attained to out of Asia. He was succeeded by his stepson Tiberius, who ruled for twenty-three years. He was a remarkably able man, and it is said that the subject peoples never were so prosperous as in his time. But the works of Tacitus and Suetonius have heavily stippled his private life in black. How much truth there is in the charges of cruelty and viciousness we can never know, but the tendency to-day is largely to discount the statements of Tacitus, who was fanatically pro-Senate, but is guilty of many inconsistencies. Potentates like Tiberius and the Empress Theodora may largely be the victims of superior literary craft. Tiberius was succeeded by Caligula, the son of Germanicus, whose cruelties and fantasies are held to be explicable only on the ground of madness, or of that specific type of lunacy which the possession of absolute power may confer on what might otherwise have been a commonplace nature. He made his horse a consul, wished that the people had only a single head that he might cut it off at one stroke, gathered shells on the French shore in token of his victory in sight of Britain, and played other fantastic tricks before high heaven without any mass protest, until an insult to the tribune of a prætorian cohort led to his assassination in January, A.D. 41. On his death the Senate tried to reassert itself and, for three days, believed it would succeed. But it was the soldiers who were now in power. In hunting about the palace they found Claudius, the uncle of Caligula and brother of Germanicus. They hailed him as emperor, and he promised them that donation which, later, became a feature of elections by the mail-clad voters. The tragedy of the Cæsars deepens in Claudius' time. Though he was not unenlightened despite oddities of manner, and though the empire kept expanding in his time,<sup>1</sup> his domestic history has tended to dwarf the public record. He had for wife "the shameless Messalina," who was put to death for her sins and was succeeded by Agrippina, another she-devil, who poisoned her husband in order to secure the succession to her son by a former marriage. That son was Nero. If there is any name in western literature whose sound is calculated to chill the blood

<sup>1</sup> The conquest of Britain was begun by him.



at the mere mention of the word, it is that of Nero. Whether or not, like Caligula, Nero was a commonplace individual who, in ordinary circumstances, would have gone through life without even injuring a slave or robbing an orchard, and was only made wicked by overwhelming circumstances, we can never say. Like Alexander the Great, Nero had an illustrious tutelage, remaining the pupil of the philosopher Seneca after the assumption of the purple, and, later, requiting the debt towards the sage by a deliberate sentence of death. Yet Nero began well enough, and the empire continued to expand of its own huge momentum despite palace intrigues and crimes and the economic dislocations due to the whims of despotism, which rudely diverts energy rather than blights it completely. But the commonplace or dilettante intelligence of the emperor, lacking the power which can daunt without destroying, caused him to set about assassination in a way that had long been the ordinary procedure in absolute monarchies. Nero murdered his own mother, who had set him the example of assassination and could have destroyed her own progeny had reasons of state prompted and full opportunity been allowed her. Seneca and Lucan disappeared later on, with others of lesser account. Even the burning of Rome is laid at the door of the Emperor, just as the conflagration of London was ascribed to the licentious Charles II. In both cases the fire was a blessing in disguise, although there was no insurance then that could assuage the individual losses sustained. Nero converted the calamity into a boast, saying he found Rome brick and left it marble. On the ruins he built his famous "Golden House" which, though taxing the power of the people whose labours in the last analysis paid all the toll, enriched contractors and their hangers-on, who have always far more "pull" in politics than tax-payers. These have never united even in fully enfranchised states, and could less cohere in slave-driven and mercenary times. Whether there was any actual protest against Nero which led him to blame the Christians for the fire over which he is said to have fiddled, we cannot say. But it seems true that he persecuted the new sect, though perhaps less cruelly than the wholly virtuous Marcus Aurelius. As the

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supposed originator of the policy, however, Nero, with all his other vices of vanity, ostentation and homicide, became the veritable anti-Christ among men. And, when a plot against his power, which was of a kind that had become common, appeared likely to succeed, he anticipated his own butchery and passed into the lowest limbo of historical conception, beneath even the torments of Catiline, if not also of Judas Iscariot, who *did* repent if still too late. We are apt to believe that, when the despot disappeared from the scene, a sigh of relief went up from the afflicted world such as never was so deeply exhaled before. But we are probably quite wrong. As already pointed out, popular instinct is more apt to fix upon the tax-gatherers as the cause of evil than upon the veiled despot, viewed rather as a help in time of trouble could he but hear his people's prayer. There is nothing surprising, therefore, in the fact that the people seem rather to have mourned than rejoiced at the emperor's half-mysterious disappearance,<sup>1</sup> and that, for centuries afterwards, the common folk looked for the return of Nero as a redeemer rather than as the anti-Christ of our later Apocalypse. By these remarks it is not intended to whitewash Nero in the manner that is becoming applicable to all the black sheep of history. It is only intended to account for him in the dual character which was his, however settled his ultimate historical doom.

Nero was the last of the blood of the Cæsars. With none of the ruling stock left to form a dynastic nucleus, all the freer play was given to the conflict of interests among the mail-clad electors, as we have called them, and the capitalist interests working in and through them, subtly but surely, if there is difficulty in detecting their more subterranean activities.<sup>2</sup> *A priori* one would necessarily conclude that, unless a man of exceptionally strong character or capacity (or both combined) emerged, there would be great instability in the situation with the dynastic element thus rooted out. On some such lines we have to rationalise the fact that Galba, who made his way to the throne through the soldiers of Spain, reigned only eight months

<sup>1</sup> He was buried in a private sepulchre.

<sup>2</sup> Seneca, "the richest of philosophers," seems to have caused a crisis in Roman Britain by calling in large investments which he had made and thought himself in danger of losing altogether (Duruy).

and was killed by the Prætorians, because he withheld rewards promised in his name. Tacitus says of Galba: "Everyone would have pronounced him worthy of being emperor if he had never actually been one." He was superseded by his crony Otho,<sup>1</sup> who committed suicide in despair of controlling rapacious soldiers and ambitious pretenders. Then Vitellius, a gourmand, pushed on from lower Germany by ambitious subordinates, sat uneasily on the throne for almost a year, when he was struck down on the Gemonian stairs, exclaiming "Yet I was your Emperor!" He was succeeded by Vespasian, appointed to the purple by the soldiers in Judea and Syria, "military deep calling unto military deep at the noise of the waters." Vespasian, a plain, blunt man, was one of the most successful emperors, not avaricious perhaps as Tacitus and Suetonius declare, but rather wisely economical in right directions, yet giving encouragement in others, as in pensioning men of letters and professors. But, while Vespasian could dignify despotism by his acts, no man has more satirised its pretensions than he by his whispered satirical remark on his death-bed, "Methinks I am becoming a god!" His son Titus succeeded him, and, though he reigned only two years, has left an equally favourable impression in history. Before he was emperor he took Jerusalem and destroyed it, thus completing the "evacuation" of Israel. Titus' reign is memorable for the eruption of Vesuvius that overwhelmed Herculaneum and Pompeii. Titus was succeeded by his brother Domitian, who was a pretentious purist in the earlier part of his reign, but, in the endeavour to overcome refractoriness later, resorted to the use of that erratic violence that leads to the verdict "madness" in such cases for lack of a better term. In September A.D. 96 he was stabbed by a freeman who is supposed to have acted at the instigation of the emperor's wife, who felt her life unsafe. Nerva, an oldish man, quiet, kindly, dignified, and honest, succeeded, but after ruling for over a year "adopted" Trajan. And the century closes with an emperor who not only gave the empire its greatest amplitude but a particular burnish of his own.

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<sup>1</sup> Otho had also been an intimate of Nero, and his accession stood for a reaction on Neronian lines.

In a century Rome had seen thirteen emperors at the helm "governing that great ship of state which had its stern in the Indian Ocean and its bow by the Pillars of Hercules." The reigns of three potentates were covered by months not years. Eight emperors died by violence, only one was superseded without it. Yet let the reader not exaggerate the apparent instability. Though greedy cohorts uttered discordant acclaims at each crisis in Rome and surged forward towards the eternal city, though tax-gatherers and spies were rife in the land, though freemen degenerated as slaves multiplied upon the soil and faction ceased not under the livery of a common yoke, yet harmonies had established themselves unknown since the waters had gathered themselves together into the great central sea, albeit the stability was bought at the price of a freedom which was not of so much value in itself as a protection against a barbarism which found no common irreducible patriotism and manliness in its way when it willed to destroy, and opportunity did not lack.<sup>1</sup> Yet, grand as was the synthesis that established itself round the gleaming shores of the Mediterranean Sea, let the reader not forget that it was but one of a group that spread eastward to the China Sea, most of them much beclouded compared with Rome, but still, in their regional as distinct from their political character, governing greater numbers than in the west, with less slavery perhaps in their life if more heaviness in their general art. Always let the reader keep these greater perspectives in view, and keep in mind also that, calamitous as remained the career of Civilisation, even in the first Christian century there were far more men included in that category than under the "barbarism" that was yet to strike such deadly blows.

## THE SECOND CENTURY

(A.D. 100 TO 200)

*Japan.*—This century, towards its close, saw the beginning of Jingoism in Japan, but of a different sort from that of our west in the nineteenth century. Jingo

<sup>1</sup> "Nothing could compensate for the lack of self-determination" is how Pelman puts it (*Ency. Brit.*, article "Rome").

was an empress who is said to have invaded Korea about A.D. 200 and exacted tribute from the peninsula kings struck prostrate at "the invincible army of Japan." The incident is so choke-full of the supernatural that critics say, when all of it is pared away, it is doubtful if a morsel of historical truth remains. "So it seems difficult to swear by Jingo," as the writer once heard it pithily put.

*China.*—There is little to be said about China in this century except that, towards its close, the power of the Eastern Hans began to decline. A plague also broke out which lasted for some ten years. Chang Chio, a Taoist priest, who pretended that he had discovered a cure to be wrought by enchantment, used it, not so much to root out the insanitary evil as to carve out a way to the throne through his magic. He did not succeed, whether through detection of the quackery or not we cannot say.

*India.*—It is but the most baffling glimpses that we get of India in this century. Great as may have been the dislocations and re-barbarised as may have been the cultures, north-west India yet seems to have been in diplomatic touch with Rome in Trajan's time. Probably, however, it is a safe guess that Brahmanism was still overcoming Buddhism, and that Hellenism was also being uprooted in its diminishing asylums.

*The Near East.*—Armenia in this century remains a pawn in the political game between Rome and Parthia. The latter country was suffering from the dynastic troubles that had broken out in the preceding era. While so disturbed Trajan began battering heavily from the west in an attempt to get to India after the manner of Alexander the Great.<sup>1</sup> And, almost for the first time in his life, the emperor tasted the bitterness of defeat in a vain attempt to take the desert city of Hatra, before which he nearly lost his life. Thus Rome found Irania a harder nut to crack than the Greeks did, not because the latter were braver, more skilful, or more powerful, but because circumstances were altered—the Greeks having apparently caught Iran in one of the weak moments from which it

<sup>1</sup> The Romans may also have wanted to get through to China, especially in connection with the silk trade, which the Parthians tried, of course, to monopolise as middlemen. There seems to have been a constant reaching out on trading lines, Bactria, for instance, in the second century B.C., trying to get to the sea as Russia did in modern times.

suffered in a life singularly energetic in its militarism for the reasons already stated. Hadrian, who succeeded Trajan, was animated by the policy of Augustus rather than by that of his immediate predecessor, and restored the conquered provinces to Parthia, which enjoyed peace until the time of Marcus Aurelius (117 to 162 A.D.). The Roman strokes then inflicted had the effect, not so much of imposing Latin influence as rooting out the Hellenic by the fall of Seleucids. The city was destroyed by the Romans. The Aramaic thereupon took the place of the Greek language, and Christianity insinuated itself in the ample folds of the speech.

*Rome.*—The second century of Imperial Rome is that of the “Good Emperors”—Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius, whose reigns carry on the story to A.D. 180.<sup>1</sup> Then comes a dynastic welter similar to that after the fall of Nero and a reattainment of stability under another capable man. And thus the story goes on to the end, losses and decay that seem irreparable being again and again transcended, until the balance between barbarism and culture was overthrown by irresistible influences emanating from inner Asia that had earlier triumphed in obscurer times, and were never to cease until gunpowder reinforced the civilised defence. Though there is greater satisfaction for an historian in repainting the character of good despots than in dwelling on the vices of the evil ones, he may yet exaggerate the beneficence as much as the wickedness. As already indicated, even palatial vice, having to work under economic law, while impoverishing in one direction may enrich in another, and be powerless to blight beyond a very small radius if causing awkward enough dislocations at points. Thus Gibbon’s famous ascription of a maximum of happiness and prosperity for the “human race” in the time of the good emperors may be seriously astray on various lines. First of all, it ignores the probability that much of the orderly energy stood for increased fiscal power against natives forced to combat against supposed enemies for an imperialism that was really as ruinous under a Marcus Aurelius as under a Nero. Secondly, mass happiness and misery are such huge quantities as hardly to be weighable in any scales

<sup>1</sup> If Nerva be included we have “the Five Good Emperors.”

yet invented. Thirdly, Gibbon leaves out of account that Rome was heavily weighed down with the fact of slavery, and it certainly was not his intention to suggest that the limited freedom even of his own time might be a hindrance rather than a help in the pursuit of happiness. Fourthly, Gibbon's "human race" is confined to the Mediterranean, and his judgment airily ignores the Asiatic sections of our breed. Yet not only were they much greater in numbers than the Roman populations but also had they less bondage in their midst, and, in China, career was opening to talent in greater fashion perhaps than in the west. In fine, Gibbon's dictum is really as worthless as it is famous. In reading the entrancing story of the good emperors, therefore, the reader is warned that, while it is to be hoped despotic virtue has power to radiate further from the palace than wickedness, it is well to be cautious in considering evaluations even as touching only the societies immediately concerned, and to be utterly sceptical as to judgments that so lightly include the whole human race. Even if imperial biographies cannot possibly sum up the national life, there is supreme satisfaction in reading about the good emperors—the soldierly Trajan who put a term to the work of expansion; the peripatetic Hadrian, with his astonishing versatility and prodigious memory, whispering in his dying moments: "Animula, vagula, blandula"; Antoninus Pius with his kindly disposition, simple taste, and shrewd intelligence; and Marcus Aurelius, the kingly Stoic standing out austere, pure, and lonely like some white marble monument on the side of a sunlit hill. Though Marcus Aurelius persecuted the Christians in a systematic way not possible to Nero, his otherwise spotless life and his "Meditations," which have happily been preserved to humanity, make of him "the one unbeatified saint of Christendom." Aurelius was succeeded by his son Commodus, who gave rein to vices that might have been overlooked had he had half the governing talent of earlier potentates better able to cloak their sins or to vent their viciousness in safer directions. Commodus was therefore the victim of a palace plot after a reign of twelve years, during which, we are told, wars were carried on successfully if not on a first-class scale, great public works were prosecuted, the afflicted succoured by the government,

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and Christians not only tolerated but liberated from prison. Once again the emperor's caprices, great as they were, seem to have done little harm to the people, if rousing resentment in the imperial *entourage*. Pertinax who succeeded Commodus was the son of a charcoal burner, but able, and said to be of unblemished character. Setting seriously about the work of government on constructional lines he ran hard against a military snag, and made shipwreck of his life after a reign of only eighty-six days. Then the Empire was literally put up to auction, and a wealthy senator, Didius Julianus, egged on by his wife and daughter, had it knocked down to him at 6250 denarii per man, he having jumped from 5000 up to that point with an alacrity which captivated the Prætorians. But the armies of Syria, Pannonia, and Britain could not be indifferent to elections in which they could have neither voice nor resultant spoil. Septimius Severus, the commander of the Pannonian legion, showed most initiative. He marched from Germany to Rome, routed Julianus, who was killed by a common soldier after a reign of only sixty-six days, disbanded the Prætorians but reconstituted them on a wider basis, went eastwards and beat his Syrian rival, went westwards and routed the Occidental pretender, and then returned to Rome breathing threatenings and slaughter against the Senate which seemed to have preferred the western commander. So twenty-nine senators were killed and the rest severely lectured—one home truth being that the late lamented Commodus was not half so vicious as some recalcitrant senators themselves. So another able man wiped up another of the political messes that were breaking out chronically from the Tigris to the Thames. The reader may quite justifiably wonder why such patent instability did not make the Romans resort to the simple hereditary principle in government. The answer is that there were too many claimants to the throne, such as it was, the one thing on which the pretenders were united being the unworthiness of the person actually gaining power. And the reader should remember that countries acting on the hereditary principle had the very same troubles—some scions of the ruling dynasty always breaking out into open rebellions for reasons which seldom or never were the true ones—love of place and



power on the part of the pretenders rather than a consuming thirst for the public weal. It is extremely doubtful, however, if the hereditary principle of succession is such a bulwark for states as is generally imagined. For one "republican" state that has fallen by the way in the course of history there are five or six monarchical.<sup>1</sup> And to-day Europe is strewn with the ruins of its greatest dynasties, whose close hereditary panoply could not stand the strain of a war against republican France and America in alliance with the "crowned republics" of Great Britain and Italy, whose political examples are being followed in the hope of securing the strength that formerly was lacking.

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### THE THIRD CENTURY

(A.D. 200 TO 300)

*Japan.*—In the old spirit of thankfulness for small mercies regarding the history of Japan we have to note that shipbuilding is believed to have made great progress in this century, one vessel, a hundred feet long, having, it is said, been constructed. That is little compared to the triumphs of Japan to-day, but a knowledge of the older fact might have saved some European prophets at the end of the nineteenth century from being confounded as to the inaptitude of the nation in such a line.<sup>2</sup> We are also told that, after the wars referred to in our last section on Japan, Korea and she had come to terms, and Chinese influences, filtering through peninsula sources, began mightily to affect the insular kingdom.

*China.*—In this century China is badly disrupted, even as we shall find Rome to be. It is the period of what is known as the "Three Kingdoms," roughly corresponding to the larger geographical divisions of the country. We are told that war became chronic with power falling into the hands of generals, pretty much as we find it to-day in the unsettlement set up some years ago. But, despite

<sup>1</sup> Of course there have always, until to-day, been more monarchies than republics, and no relative percentage can be worked out. But the fact remains that more "kingdoms" have gone to waste than "peoples."

<sup>2</sup> The writer cannot give exact references now to these false prophecies tucked away to-day in old and inaccessible journals. But Professor Purvis, who lived in Japan, waxed sarcastic on the subject some years ago in the annual supplement of the *Glasgow Herald*.

all the ancient ructions, we read that, in A.D. 284, ambassadors reached China from the court of the Roman Emperor Diocletian.

*India.*—In this century there is a “Kushan” king reigning at Peshawar (Purushapura), who not only kept a grip of north-west India, but also conquered Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan through the dreadful passes of the Pamirs, incomparably more difficult than the Alps. It is a feat that makes Hannibal’s or Napoleon’s crossings look like child’s play in comparison. But, as it has been said, men will more readily attempt to scale heaven or grope towards hell in search after suzerainty than toil obscurely on the level ground to better their neighbours. Perhaps the only great military mountain feat not tainted with imperialism is that of the South American general San Martin who scaled one of the most frightful Andean passes, and so took the Spaniards in the rear in the name of a “liberty” that was really worth striving after. But the Indian king in question, Kanishka, has a reputation for religiousness second only to that of Asoka. The invading races seem to have taken up Buddhism in its struggle with Brahmanism even as we shall find barbarians espousing Arianism in the west—the “polarisation” perhaps being due less to religious conviction than to that “sheer cussedness” which so often engenders political opposition among races made rivals by the very conflicting aggressiveness of their claims. But, extraordinary as may have been the feats of Kushan and “Andran” kings, they suffered sudden blight like the Assyrians, perhaps exhausted by the vaulting nature of their imperialism. In any case the remainder of this century is all but a blank in Indian history. The few meaningless names, so far from throwing any light on the period, rather make the darkness visible to all but professed numismatists.

*Persia.*—In this century events happened on the Iranian plateau which justify us in resuming the title of Persia for this section. The little homily indulged in regarding the lack of primogeniture in Rome has its own moral in this connection. The fairly settled principles of succession in the Parthian Empire neither preserved it from inward rebelliousness nor from overwhelming defeat when a real menace came from rival stocks. In the core of mountains

which had given birth to the illustrious Cyrus another intelligence emerged—Ardashir (Artaxerxes) I—and instituted what is known as the “Sassanid Empire.”<sup>1</sup> He completely defeated the Parthians, driving the remnants of the dynasty who escaped death into the buffer states of Armenia. The new Empire he founded was much less loose in its structure than that of his predecessors, the Parthians. And, though the restriction of autonomy might stand for certain political disadvantages, we are told that, not only were the rapacious feudal nobility held in check, but a very efficient system of legislation also operated generally throughout the Empire. No more however than their predecessors did the new-comers learn the full moral of political toleration. Empire was still the aim east, north, and west, with frustration ever attending the efforts at expansion outwith the natural frontiers of Iran. And, intellectually, there evolved an intolerance lacking in the ancient Achæmenian case. It was natural perhaps that the vestiges of Greek should be fought against as memorials of an unforgotten thrall. But religious feeling in Iran itself also hardened into a bigotry previously unknown, engendering internal persecutions which weakened the state, and gave new barbs to the unenlightened imperial assaults, ending in frustrations leading to the destruction of the very creed fought for with such tigerish ferocity. But this will have to be dealt with more fully in its proper place.

*Rome.*—In the century in hand Roman history is confused compared with the preceding era of mainly good emperors whose foibles as well as whose virtues seem to give definition to the inimitable period. From A.D. 200 to 300 the potentates are not only much more numerous, but grand traits are lacking in the picture, albeit good emperors rule as well as bad ones. But the curious thing in this century is that the virtuous rather than the wicked are cut down, and just because of their virtues. Little wonder perhaps that the period with its sometimes inextricable political complications<sup>2</sup> is generally spoken of as

The first Empire is known as the “Achæmenian,” while the Parthian figures as the “Arsacid.”

<sup>2</sup> At one time thirty “tyrants” are said to have been struggling for power. Even if there were only half that number (which is perhaps more credible) the confusion was great enough in all conscience.

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an age of "decline." But again the present writer asks those who have followed him thus far to be very careful of the evaluation. There is not the slightest reason for believing that man's power over his "environment" had been diminished one iota at the time in question. Deserted cities and waste lands might exist in plenty, but any "decline" in that connection stood rather for an increase in malignity operating perhaps through actual advance in the science of war, due to increased knowledge on the barbarian as well as on the civilised side. To-day the devastated districts of France are a witness to actual "improvements" in material science backed up by a malignity as keen-edged as in the time of Tamerlane. In short, although there are a few "lost arts" of a very minor description, mechanical ingenuity has never failed since the human dawn. Races might be overwhelmed with their material structures, but, so long as the tool-using art itself was not drowned out in blood, there might soon be complete recovery even from a much diminished stock. For ideas are immortal and know no frontiers, and brutal conquerors themselves, necessarily conserving the basic arts, nourished without knowing it the Promethean fire which could relume desolate hearths as well as their own monstrous palaces. Thus though, in the third century, the Roman Empire shook to its political foundations, fundamental potencies remained even as in Europe to-day which can only decline and fall completely by a war which will wipe out practically all its inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Let us apply these summary considerations to the case in hand. The general moan indulged in by historians over this period of history makes barbarian aggressiveness a consequence of inward "decay." Seldom or never does the analysis go any further. Let us try now to dig a little deeper into the processes at work. Despite the fact of "empire" in the time of Augustus Roman political centralisation had still a long way to go. Cities not only remained "free," but provinces were left practically undisturbed as regards their laws and customs. Assimilation, how-

<sup>1</sup> As already hazarded this *may* happen by use of poison gases on practically a continental scale. But even then man's *mechanical* power would still have attained what was its final crescendo, with his "morality" expiring totally in the effort.

ever, was bound to proceed up to all the limits of the case. As already indicated, however,<sup>1</sup> the Roman impression was infinitely varied because of the different environments encountered. Thus, in the east, where there was greater intellectual sophistication if less political and military stamina, Rome was mentally conquered by Hellenism as Alexander was by "Orientalism." Not only did the eastern languages persist, but their religions were completely to prevail against the largely borrowed polytheism of Rome. Thus Greek not only prevailed latterly among the civilised communities of the Orient, but Byzantine Christianity was carried up through the Balkans into Russia because of its proximity to these "barbarians." On the other hand Latin tended to become the language of the western countries, because it was relatively much more highly specialised than the barbarian forms of speech. In both cases, beneath the political symmetry there would tend to be reassertion if not "rebellion," when the new moulds had turned out their political products necessarily varied by the climatic, geographic, ethnic, and other influences making up the highly varied environments. So we find the Jews ("fixed in their fanaticism," as it has been put) rebellious to a degree when threatened in the elements of their creed, and passing naturally to that "offensive which is the best defence," according to a much favoured dogma of militarism. Even the Egyptians revolted with the aid of a feeble enough national consciousness despite their antiquity. And, with all the Greek submissiveness, there smouldered the same embers of individuality which made the modern Hellenes revolt among the earliest of the oppressed nationalities in the nineteenth century. So Iberians, Gauls, and others, though having lost their mother tongues, could, when the time came, "individualise" even in Latin, or perhaps close up round smouldering dialects being fanned into flame again by such spirits of patriotism as are animating the Irish to-day, when only a mere handful speak the Gaelic, now to be artificially reimposed by the state. In Ireland at the moment we can see what desolation has been wrought—first by the common revolt against Britain, and next by the sections fighting for or against the "compromise."

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<sup>1</sup> See before, p. 145.

So, under the mask of the Roman Empire, nations new yet old were struggling for reassertion by the tortuous paths which communities alone can follow because of the conflict of interests that persists beneath common enough ideals, as the case of Ireland again vividly enough shows. So, while there may have been a weakening of political stamina in one sense by the developing centralisation of Rome, there could be at the same time the formation of ideals, if only in germs, capable of propagating indestructibly if not with the swiftness of diseases in the human organism. On no other grounds, it seems to the present writer, can the fact be accounted for that Caracalla in A.D. 212 conferred the right of citizenship on all the subjects of the Empire. That move is often explained by the fact that the spendthrift emperor was needing more money. But it is more reasonable to conclude that, just as the Italians got the franchise while Sulla was decimating their ranks, so there were protests and pushes behind the "gesture" of Caracalla which we should not underrate. That point of assimilation once gained, the next step, at least on the part of sections, would naturally be in the direction of real autonomy, which, no doubt, could have been "abused" by the tendencies towards complete separation, with aggressiveness arising spontaneously among the enfranchised stocks as in our time among the Balkan nations, which were harmonious only in the general hatred of the Turk. Thus the tumult, waste, confusion, and degradation making up the ostensible history of Rome in the third century might in some cases no more stand for "decay" than in liberated Jugo-Slavia to-day or enfranchised Ireland. This alternative at any rate is well worth consideration as a not unimportant factor in the case. And the idea expressed closely correlates with the problem of "barbarism" involved in the issue. The undeniable fact is that Civilisation, as standing for increased mechanical knowledge at least, had expanded enormously even since Cæsar's time. We do not really know what was going on in the barbaric hinterlands, but we can at least guess. It has already been noted that these barbarians were weak, not only as regards their lack of science and material resources, but also because so many of them enlisted on the Roman side. Some of these

mercenaries, affected by the homesickness from which no human being is entirely free, returned to die in their farms and villages, but carried with them the ideas they had acquired in the sunnier lands they had traversed. They would thus tend to leaven the rural mass, even as the French soldiers returning from the American War of Independence helped to set up new fermentations under the *ancien régime*. Even the borderland barbarians, who never enlisted, were bound to imbibe something of the knowledge constantly being renewed by the legionaries drafted from the more civilised districts. And behind all this we have to think of merchant adventurers, however rare, spreading the light of their particular culture as they cadged about for pelts, or swopped trinkets for the amber of their desire. Thus, just as some Roman peoples at least were rebellious because of progress rather than "decay," so the barbarians in this century were assertive because they were becoming relatively enlightened, but still dowered by the same imperialism as their civilised opponents. With their greater, if cruder, initiative they could have probably overwhelmed the world long before, could they have stopped the mercenary migration and united among themselves.<sup>1</sup> As it was, a rawer barbarism behind them was to drive them forcibly to the work which they might never have accomplished of their own accord. In a sense the word "decay" may be more applicable to the barbarians than to the Romans, for the more they approximated to their cultured neighbours though the imperial incentive might persist, the less powerful and destructive would be their attack. Hence the relatively civilised folks went down before the more barbarous Huns in the next century. So, if "decay" is applicable to the Romans, it is equally applicable to the Germans. And the question arises where is this psychological appraisal to stop? Was Attila's the only sound and healthy polity in the world at that time? If so, it did not survive his life, and the decay there was irremediable, since the Huns vanished as if the earth had swallowed them up. "Decadence," therefore, may have a certain relative value in historical matters, but, for any sake, let us beware of

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<sup>1</sup> Herodotus noted that, if only the Scythians could have united, they would have conquered the world.

the overneat formula that nations and empires have their *necessary* rise, decline, and fall. The fall may be a fact, but the "necessity" a fancy. China in a valid ethnic and geographic sense has never really "fallen" and neither has Persia, despite the present political pass of these countries. The reader may be none too thankful for this inevitably dry disquisition as to Rome in the third century, and might have preferred exposition on the old lines of thumb-nail sketches of the emperors—the antics of the Syrian Heliogabalus, of the peasant emperor Maximin "who exceeded eight feet in height, his wife's bracelet made him a thumb ring; he could draw a loaded waggon, break a horse's leg with a kick, and crumble sandstones with his hands; could eat forty pounds of meat in one day, and wash it down with seven gallons of wine." Are not these things written in the ordinary Book of Kings to which the reader is advised to turn? In any event the writer can only respectfully commend his considerations, which, however arid, represent the most vigorous thinking of which he is capable on lines where he found practically no speculation to help him. Despite the political chaos touched upon which made even Romans think the day of empire was done, there was a wonderful revival even as at the end of the preceding century. Indeed the emperor Diocletian, an organising genius of the highest type, gave it a constitution which, with modifications certainly, yet served the eastern section for a thousand years and more after his time. Decay indeed!

## THE FOURTH CENTURY

(A.D. 300 TO 400)

*Japan.*—It seems that, in this century, Koreans passed freely into Japan as colonists as well as prisoners of war apparently, and it is rather oddly narrated that "seamstresses" were brought over from the continent. We are also told that an "ice-house" was constructed. The emperor under whom these not inconspicuous things were done is named Nintoku. He is one of the romantic characters in his country's history. His younger brother had been designated by their father as emperor, but the



youth, instead of taking advantage of a golden opportunity which would have been only too heartily welcomed in western Asia, insisted on Nintoku taking his rightful place.<sup>1</sup> The latter as steadily refused the honour, and, for three years, the throne was vacant over a dispute unique surely in the annals of monarchy. Then the younger brother cut the Gordian knot by committing suicide in a fashion familiar to the race; whereupon Nintoku took up the task of government, though not without reluctance. Instead of concerning himself with his own comfort however, he insisted on the labourers attending to their plots rather than to his palace, and he ate the coarsest bread rather than infringe upon national supplies. He seems to have been successful in good works, but less happy in his love affairs, being the one Japanese potentate, we are told, who was defied by his wife. But this story should perhaps be taken *cum grano salis*. The period is also notable for the institution of what we might now call a "census of production."

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*China*.—In this century the western Ts'in Dynasty fell upon evil times. The barbarian Hiung-nu, who had been thrust into inner Asia, came forward in renewed force, and succeeded in establishing thrones in the midst of native dynasties rising upon the ruins of the imperial rule. Whether there may have been tendencies to autonomy in China just as in Rome at the same time we cannot clearly say. But, since Civilisation cannot be said to have been "decaying" in any valid sense of the term, it is well to keep in mind that inward assertiveness may have played its part in this era of Chinese political evolution just as much as barbarian assault. And it is also probable that, to some extent, these barbarians were powerful because of absorption of military science from their more civilised neighbours, just as has been hazarded in the case of Rome.

*India*.—While, in this century, barbarians are breaking down the civilised defence in China and Europe, India is exempt from the attack. The east and west indeed seem to have drawn off every menace from the south. So we naturally find a great political revival in Hindustan, although the record of it seems to have been completely

<sup>1</sup> In Japan itself there were, of course, dynastic brawls in the Imperial family—later on, at least, when records are more reliable.

lost until it was recovered in recent years from coins and inscriptions. In Buddha's old centre of Magadha there arose, about A.D. 320, a sovereign called Chandragupta I, who is not to be confounded with the potentate of the same name who beat back the Greeks, and from whose stock sprang Asoka. This new Chandragupta founded what is known as the "Gupta Dynasty." His son Samudra Gupta is believed to have been one of the greatest of Indian kings, reigning over a territory nearly as great as that of Asoka. But, instead of fostering Buddhism like the earlier dynasty, it was now the turn of Brahmanism to be favoured, but apparently not to the neglect of literature and art. To all those who wish to see history steadily and see it whole this re-erection of a magistral political symmetry in India, when China and Rome are supposed to have been "decaying," is a significant commentary on the "necessity" of decline recently alluded to. India regained its soul as "necessarily" as did China in its repeated avatars. All that we can safely say is that barbarism is the most active agent in whatever degradation has taken place, and in that sense nomadism has always been the enemy. But the reader is again cautioned against thinking that successful imperialism among civilised stocks stands for something better than the antecedent political separatism. It may, on the contrary, imply a real worsening of conditions in some cases, if self-determination is really the final word in politics as all now hold it to be, though too many may still pay only lip-homage to the doctrine. In any case the political renaissance of India in the fourth century is another instance of the fallacy of "political necessitarianism," as indicated.

*Persia.*—The Sassanid Dynasty founded in the previous century took up immediately the duel with Rome after the domestic conquests had been completed. Success as well as frustration attended the efforts, as always happened. While, in A.D. 260, the Roman emperor Valerian had been defeated and taken captive,<sup>1</sup> there was no permanent progress made westwards, and Armenia remained a bone

<sup>1</sup> Valerian is said to have been treated with great indignity by the Persians, being used as a horse-block for the Shah. It is also alleged that, after he died, his skin was tanned and stuffed, and deposited in a Persian temple. "Yarns" probably!

of contention that could not be wholly appropriated by either side. In the century in hand these contentions continued with Zoroastrianism on the one side and Christianity on the other barbing the malignities in quite new-fangled fashion. Mesopotamia remained the chief battle-ground, and it was there in A.D. 363 that Julian the Apostate fell and his successor Jovian with difficulty managed to scrape back into Europe only to die, of a fierce indigestion it is said, while still far from home. Before the end of this century a peace was concluded with Rome, but, of course, it did not last. It should also be noted that Persia in this century was not free from dynastic troubles nor from still more ominous scuffles with the barbarians generally known as the "Huns." But these need not concern us here.

*Rome.*—It has been pointed out in these pages that, in a world developing in science but remaining endowed or afflicted with the desire of imperialism, Rome and Italy were best situated for suzerainty as long as the centre of political gravity remained in the Mediterranean and could not include the still raw nations of central and northern Europe. Things were bound to alter completely when social and political science had embraced the whole of Europe in its sweep. But, in the fourth century, northern Europe was still barbaric if less so than in preceding centuries as already hazarded. Paradoxical as it may seem, but for these same barbarians the empire might have broken up by spontaneous combustion before its western segment was overrun and politically disrupted. For any growth of assertiveness inside tending to the creation of freer nations and commonwealths must have been held in check by the fear of barbarism. That would cause native Britons, harassed by Picts and Scots, to hang on to a system that protected them equally with distant Armenians harassed by horsemen outflanking the Caucasus, utterly ignorant as both groups might be of each other's existence. But, as the barbaric pressure increased, the cost of defence mounted up, and, what with the rapacity of the tax-gatherers, local recalcitrance, bureaucratic waste, and civil dissensions, things went badly astray economically. But Diocletian evolved a certain order out of this chaos, albeit his famous "system" stood not only for increase of

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the bureaucracy but also for a ceremonialism quite Oriental in its character. Yet stiffen things up he certainly seems to have done. But changes were taking place which no constitution-mongering could ever checkmate. It has already been pointed out that the east remained Hellenic despite the Roman suzerainty. As Greece lay nearer the centre of the great populations of Eurasia, and population and markets were increasing in the northern hinterlands despite their "barbarity," it stands to reason that the really indestructible Hellenic individuality would reassert itself in the slow development of the social forces. Byzantium with its incomparable situation is but the symbol of Hellenic assertiveness necessarily going somewhat northwards with the advance of science however obscured to us now. Rome, never a great commercial metropolis, could not compete with this new metropolis, so much better placed for control in the altered disposition of things. Rome was already something of a "back number" in the days of Diocletian, who fixed his four seats of government away from the eternal city.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor Constantine, with a truer instinct, fixed upon Byzantium as the new nucleus round which the other governments were intended to revolve. To what extent Constantine was working purposively in his choice we cannot say, but political divining rod was never more happily applied. For Constantinople remains one of the world's most "inevitable" capitals. Its emergence and dedication form one of the significant facts of the fourth century. More portentous even than the choice of a capital was the adoption of a new state religion. As already mentioned, Christianity was only one of a number of religions competing in the east for the suffrages of mankind. However great its affinities may be with other cults it yet asserted itself as a distinct system, with its creed still unfixed in the beginning of the fourth century. Its dogmas, however, were being moulded into shape by the force of circumstances. In the older "pagan" times there had existed a toleration which was being rapidly abandoned, at least in the more westerly countries. Japan and China have all along conceded a *locus standi* to quite different cults. And while Brahmanism pushed Buddhism

<sup>1</sup> They were Mediolanum, Augusta Trevirorum, Sirmium, and Nicomedia.

out of India in virtue of its sheer bulk probably like a cuckoo in the nest rather than by wicked designs, yet Hinduism can accommodate almost any other dogmas of a positive kind that do not seem absolutely to conflict with its own.<sup>1</sup> In Persia, too, in ancient times religious toleration was quite marked, Cyrus and his successors allowing much autonomy as already noted, while the intrusive Alexander the Great kowtowed at almost every shrine. In the Sassanid times however, which we have now reached, Zoroastrianism had become quite imperialistic in the sphere of religion. There must be only one form of faith in the dominion of the king of kings. The cause of this hardening of dogma is not easy to understand. It may however have been due to some extent to growth in logic—to a sharpening of intellectual perception. For, if the god adored were absolute and methods of propitiation a revelation of his grace, it was of course absurd to allow any competition as to the character of the divinity or the ritualism he had commanded. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me!” thus became as naturally the attitude of the Persians as of the Jews. For the Bible itself bears witness that an older toleration had existed, Jahweh evidently being once only *primus inter pares*, while there was to be some consideration for the Canaanite who knew the manner of the god of the land. The Jews’ loss of political independence probably only intensified the absolutism of their religion. Thus they were “supreme fanatics” even in advance of the Sassanids. Since Christianity sprang from the bosom of Judaism it necessarily preached its variations in a form as absolute as its parent creed and as its competitors. So the east, in the first Christian centuries, through advance in mental consistency to a certain extent, became a hotbed of religious strife which terribly complicated the unrenounced secular imperialisms. What are the inner secrets of the progress, however slowly, of Christianity we cannot say. For it does not really advance the matter to repeat the orthodox avowal that it was God’s will, or the secularist reply that the creed had greater powers of adaptation than Mithraism, since these

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<sup>1</sup> The Totemistic brawls of ancient Egypt already commented on implied religious intolerance to some extent, but were probably even more “village pump politics.”

characteristics seem to escape all convincing delineation. The point to be here noted is one on which there is no dispute. It is that, considerable as the number of Christians might be in the time of Constantine especially in the east, they must yet have been a minority of the population of the Empire. But their absolutism and their unity under persecution made them powerful out of all proportion to their number in a society where paganism had become flaccid because of the enormous diversity of the customs composing it. Hence Christianity, fighting for its life against Zoroastrianism and Judaism, but with no pure racial taint behind it as in these other cases, had immense possibilities in the virgin soil of paganism. Whether Constantine divined these possibilities, as he did those regarding Byzantium, we cannot say. But adopt Christianity he did, if with no sincere conviction yet with a political success which left little to be desired. Whatever, therefore, we may think of Constantine as a man, there is no gainsaying the fact that his reign marks a "turning point in history," if there is really such a thing. His conquest over his pagan rivals, however, left him with his hands full of trouble of another sort wherein his political absolutism could not say the final word. It was natural that Christianity, elaborating its dogmas slowly under persecution, should leap forward towards finality of exposition when it basked in the sunshine of state patronage. The very natural result was that the Christians, hanging quite devotedly together in the days of their common trials, broke out into irreconcilable feuds over the "distinctions without differences" that are said to be specially prevalent in religious controversy. So the followers of Arius and Athanasius made the welkin ring with their discordant cries, and crowns were cracked, cities taken by assault, and provinces laid waste in what seemed incomprehensible frenzies to the still numerous adorers of Zeus, Demeter, and the rest. Into this, of course, we cannot go further here, except to note, in this century, the emergence of substantially novel malignities which were not only to aggravate the natural differences between east and west within the empire but also to antagonise it still further with Persia, and, more especially, to weaken it first against barbarian assaults, and, latterly, against

Mohammedan attacks which succeeded largely because of religious animosities among Christians and Zoroastrians. It further falls to be noted that Constantine's adoption of Christianity did nothing to purify the palace morals of monarchs. Many years after his conversion Constantine put his oldest son to death. His other sons on his demise, following in their father's footsteps, attempted to wipe out each other with a revengefulness which no pagans could have surpassed. In less than thirty years the dynasty was extinct in the direct line, with Julian the Apostate on the throne attempting to revive a religion whose utter diffusion of thought made it a hopeless competitor in the race with its absolutist opponents. Paganism therefore tumbled hopelessly aside when the galvanic shocks were no longer applied by Julian, who was killed in a pitched battle with the Persians in Mesopotamia, which was to continue to be the graveyard of so many hopes. Julian is pure in character compared with his uncle or his cousins. But his mind was wedded to a lost cause in religion and to an equally hopeless policy of imperial expansion. No historian to-day seriously urges that he cried out in his agony, "Galilean, thou hast conquered!" But it would have been a true saying all the same when assayed in the scales of science apart from religious prepossession. After the death of Julian the empire split definitely into east and west, in consequence of long, if suppressed, antagonisms influenced now by the opposition of the eastern Christians to the still dominant western pagans, and by the general economic and political drift of things. In the end of the fourth century the emperor Theodosius, capable as he was, could not cement the fragments together again, vigorously as he tried. The parting was really a final one, for both sections had "dreed their weird."

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## THE FIFTH CENTURY

(A.D. 400 TO 500)

*Japan.*—In this century Japan is considered to come into the clear light of historical day, trumpery or suspicious as many of the events may yet seem to be. Caste

upon trade lines is noted. Affairs of state were apparently in the hands of nobles, with the last word left to the king. There was no organised body of laws apart from custom, and no regular tribunals of justice. Guilt and innocence were tested by boiling water and molten metal, even genealogies being purged by this method in the case of pretenders to aristocratic descent. Vassals seem to have committed suicide rather than survive liege lords. Just as in other countries, while some potentates were bad, others were quite good. Yuriaku was one of the former, laying about him ruthlessly in ungovernable fits of temper which would have made him perhaps only a wife-beater had he been born a simple peasant. But he seems to have encouraged industry all the same, and he and his consort planted mulberry trees with their own hands. A variant blackguard is Nurestu, who is as hopeless in Japanese history as Nero in the Roman Empire.

*China.*—It is curious that, as Japan is coming on to the stage, China as a unit should be retiring from it temporarily. The eastern Ts'in Dynasty disappeared in A.D. 490, and there was no unity for nearly two centuries. Just as Rome had split up into east and west for causes which are discernible, if only obscurely, so did China break up into north and south, the lines of fissure also being determined by geographical, ethnic, and economic reasons, which however are not so obvious as in the western case.

*India.*—In the earlier part of this century Fa-hien, a Chinese Buddhist monk, traverses the terrible deserts of central Asia and descends into India through the mountain passes of Hindu Kush. His narrative is a valuable one in so far as it takes account of the facts of geography and the like, but it rapidly runs to seed in mysticism and theology. Fa-hien went as far as Ceylon, where he transcribed all the sacred books, witnessing the "elevation" of Buddha's tooth, and saw Arab merchants in the island centuries before Mohammed had shown the "expulsive power of a new idea." But India, free from barbarians in the preceding century, had a new visitation in this. The Ephthalites, or "White Huns," poured into the peninsula, and another "necessary" fall occurred in Hindustan.

*Persia.*—In this century Armenia, although Chris-



tianised, seceded from the special tenets of the west and founded a church of its own. A Persian sovereign, Yazdegerd, described as capable and intelligent, attempted to practise religious toleration, but lost his life as a result. He is still looked upon as the "sinner" because of his conduct. His son, Bahram V, promised obedience to the Magi and recovered the throne. He is known as "Gor—the wild ass"; but, famous as he is in Persian tradition for his exploits in the chase and in love, it is doubtful if he were not simply a tool of the priests who have "enskied" his memory. The renewed persecution of the Christians led to war with Rome and the usual frustration over irreconcilable issues. The White Huns, who had descended on India, also broke through the rampart of the Iranian hills, and the Persians, disengaging themselves from the western conflict, were hard put to it to maintain themselves against the barbarians, whose *élan* was often so dangerous.

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*Byzantium*.<sup>1</sup>—In this century the great political determinant in Europe was the Hunnish invasion from central Asia. As already observed, there is no need to assume that it was drought in the heart of Asia which set the peoples on the move. Half-savage as the tribes might be, they were probably advancing in military knowledge, and there was a consciousness, on the part of the leaders at least, that east, south, and west of their steppes great civilisations flourished in which there was an infinite quantity of loot. All that was required was that the tribes should cease their feuds and unite, with the common object of plunder, under a leader of talent. Such geniuses are by no means rare. So, even before Attila's time, there was a great drift westwards of nameless peoples and leaders. Then Attila appeared on the Volga as the supreme leader. How many Huns may have been in the barbarian camps, and what was their general tactic and plan of campaign, we cannot clearly say. But the Huns were more efficient in the art of war than the less barbarous Goths, who, under their half-legendary king Hermanric, had formed a vast empire which lay athwart the path of the Huns,

<sup>1</sup> This term will be used throughout as a shorthand expression for "the Byzantine Empire" or "Later Roman Empire," which are the expressions commonly used.

and had been in trading relations with the Grecian east. The Huns rolled up the Gothic state and enlisted many of the warriors in the Asiatic ranks. The fugitive Goths were driven forward into the Roman Empire along all its northern frontiers. Though the Grecian emperor Valens had been defeated and slain by the Goths at Adrianople<sup>1</sup> and the barbarians came within sight of Constantinople, its incomparable defences held them at bay as it did all subsequent assailants, until the Turks, who conquered in virtue of their superior cannon. So Byzantium remained intact in this century, filching provinces from the more decrepit west, continuing the endless duel with Persia, elaborating its dynastic ceremonialism, and refining upon its theological dogmas, with something purposive perhaps in disagreeing with the "papa" of Rome, but never able to secure absolute harmony within. The intelligence of the community, not being allowed free play in its thought, found an outlet for its rancours in the contention of "Blues" and "Greens" that bated not a jot of their hostility because the factions could never say what they were really fighting about.

*Rome.*—It has already been noticed that though, in 378, the Goths defeated the Emperor Valens and surged up to the walls of Constantinople, the eastern section of the Empire held on its troublous way. Not so with the western section. The Germans, pushed west by south by the Hunnish advance, accomplished in little more than a generation the ruin of that system set agoing nearly a thousand years before by the tribes located on the seven hills commanding the passage of the turbulent Tiber. In the beginning of the fourth century the famous Alaric and Radagasius were defeated by Stilicho, the notable "Vandal" general, in the pay of the western empire. He, however, on the supposition that he was aiming at the throne, was superseded and put to death by an emperor more concerned about the danger of heterodoxy than of barbarism. A procession of peoples then descended on Italy and outflanked the peninsula through Gaul and Spain and settled as far away as Carthage. In A.D. 407 Britain was evacuated by the legions; in the same year the Vandals

<sup>1</sup> The victory seems to have been due to the Gothic cavalry. That arm became of growing importance thereafter. Oman's *Art of War*.

are marching through Gaul into Spain; in 410 Alaric captured and sacked Rome; in 412 the Visigoths, following on the heels of the Vandals, are also in Gaul on their way to Spain; in 428 the Vandals are swathing a path to Carthage, helped by the frightful animosity of the Christian sects in the assertion of their absolutist dogmas; in 439 Genseric,<sup>1</sup> the lame Vandal, who was one of the wildest of men, is safely seated in the citadel of Carthage, with the corn supplies quite stopped that went as tribute to the eternal city, and the black flag of piracy is hoisted on the Vandal ships, whose chieftain began to vent his rage upon the nations "with whom God was angry"; for Genseric had no doubt at all that *he* knew the mind of Deity better than the feeble folk whom it was his mission utterly to despoil.<sup>2</sup> In 443 Burgundians have established themselves in Savoy; in 446 the "groans of the Britons" against the Picts and Scots are heard in the streets of disgruntled Rome, unable now to insure its own safety; in 450 Hengist and Horsa (or quite real barbarians under other names) are landing in England, and at the same time Attila—the dreadful Attila—is in the heart of Europe, acting as the greatest expulsive power known in western history up till that time. It is true that a combination of gallicised Romans, Goths, and others defeated Attila on "the Cautalanian fields," by what tactics and with what slaughter we do not know. But Attila seems to have remained quite powerful. He marched towards Italy, destroyed Aquileia, and advanced on Rome. The story goes that he spared the city on the intercession of the Pope. Perhaps, however, the Pope did not play such a decisive rôle as he is here credited with. But, at any rate, the Bishop of Rome was to gain in credit from this time forward and assert himself even against the Patriarch of Constantinople. The reader should carefully note that, while the prestige of Rome may have helped to this end, a much greater factor in the case was the absence of any emperors in the eternal city, the Popes taking care that their authority should not be disputed as in Byzantium. Thus fate made Roman Catholicism the heir of Latin imperialism. What evil Attila might not still have done to Europe we cannot

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<sup>1</sup> The name is more properly "Gaiseric."

<sup>2</sup> He sacked Rome to its cellars in A.D. 455.

say, for, shortly afterwards, he was found dead in the bridal bed of the beautiful Hilda, and the Huns themselves seem almost to have disappeared like bats at daylight.<sup>1</sup> But the Hunnish recoil brought no real peace to the afflicted west, less protected than the east by natural frontiers now that central and northern Europe had come definitely into the political scheme of things. Goths, Alans, Vandals and others, who were, in some cases, as civilised as any Romans, caused the Emperors to be but as puppets. And, in A.D. 476, Odoacer, a leader of mercenaries, thought it well to bring the farce to an end by dethroning Romulus Augustulus, who bore the name of the legendary founder of the city. Such a deposition was little more than a formality, however, in the general hubbub, and we can hardly imagine that there was any passing away of the Roman Empire in the consciousness of the times, although the event forms a point of departure for all historians now. The German usurper probably ruled better than the displaced emperor, but he got to loggerheads with the Pope and the Byzantine emperor, who suborned Theodoric the Ostrogoth (who was brought up in Constantinople) to carry out a new invasion of Italy, which was completely successful before the end of the fourth century. And, under him, Italy settled down into an uneasy peace. Meantime, in the fair province of Gaul ("the Egypt of the west," as it has been called) bands of invaders were settling whose advent was to fix a last ethnic stamp upon the people, and finally settle the name of the country. Clovis, king of the Franks, fought successfully in every direction. Like Constantine he became a convert to Christianity, and he too, it is alleged, had his transmuting vision amidst the tides of battle. But it was the Athanasian creed which he adopted, either through conviction or through the idea that it was a good political move to distinguish his policy from the Germanic "heretics" who were hated by the Pope. Thus France became "the eldest son of the church," if it has become a chief political pervert since. In truth, this was a fateful century in history, and it looks to us now as an opening of the seals in Revelation, even if its atmosphere did not colour the

<sup>1</sup> There is no good ground for believing that the Huns form the bed-rock people of modern Hungary.

composition of our actual Apocalypse. But it behoves the reader to be particularly careful as regards this period, in which were laid the foundations of so many of the modern nations. That there was much loss of life and "degradation" of matter and of energy is beyond all doubt. But we may be very apt to exaggerate the extent both of the political and ethnic impressions made. The indigenous populations of the Mediterranean lands invaded must have been ever so much denser than the intruders, who, just because they were so much on the move, could support only a comparatively small number of themselves if they were not to run the danger of spreading abroad in a hostile land.<sup>1</sup> It is more than likely, therefore, that the intruders were soon ethnically absorbed, for, since blue eyes and light hair were not uncommon in Italy in early imperial times,<sup>2</sup> there is no reason to believe that these characteristics to-day are hall-marks of Teutonism, according to the gospel of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, whom the war has discredited as no "philosopher" ever was before. Similarly there is every reason to believe that the barbarians, with whom custom was law, simply could not have carried on with their extremely meagre legal apparatus, and that they only too willingly adopted the existing machinery without substantial modification.<sup>3</sup> When, therefore, we think that Byzantium was to persist with really brilliant manifestations at times, and that the havoc in the west did not prevent the bulk of life from running on in the old moulds, and may even have given freer play to the forces of self-assertion that had long been at work, the "collapse of the Roman Empire," besides being only sectional, might simply be a way of regeneration by needlessly expensive methods. This view, at any rate, is very seriously urged upon the reader, and will be again commended in the sequel.

<sup>1</sup> In the recent world war we saw how Czecho-Slovak prisoners in Siberia could form up in that great lone land and hew a path towards the sea. Alans, Vandals, and Goths may similarly have scythed along through denser populations, making great lanes of havoc, perhaps, rather than causing widespread destruction.

<sup>2</sup> Nero had yellow locks.

<sup>3</sup> This theme is brilliantly worked out as regards France by Fustel de Coulanges in his admirable series, *Histoire des Institutions Politiques de l'ancienne France*.

## THE SIXTH CENTURY

(A.D. 500 TO 600)

*Japan.*—In this century there still seems to be migration from Korea and China into Japan, and it is said that a national register preserved shows that many Japanese families are of continental descent, like the English who came over with the Conqueror. But the great event in this century was the introduction of Buddhism, a Korean king acting as missionary. Simultaneously there was a plague in the country, and the conservatives were not slow to make capital against the innovation and in favour of the offended native deities. But Buddhism made headway, though not without warfare, and, just as Clovis bargained with Providence for victory against conversion, so did contending Japanese princes. History repeats itself in very curious ways. We also read that, as a result of Buddhism, men and women began to renounce the world as the master had done. And so there was an approximation towards that asceticism and monasticism which prevailed among the Essenes before the time of Christ, led hermits into the Egyptian deserts, produced the race of "pillar saints" in Syria, and religious tatterdemalions further west, who show up shabby even against the homespun of the slaves. But these hermits could yet make kings tremble in their palaces by their shrill-voiced interventions in religious politics—generally on the obscurantist side.

*China.*—In this century China recovered its political unity under the "Suy Dynasty." A better code of laws was formed, and some 5000 volumes added to the imperial library, it is said. Once again China began chastising the Tatars, not in the best spirit perhaps, while Koreans were sought similarly to be drubbed into unswerving "loyalty." "Thus does the pendulum swing to and fro in the clock of political time."

*India.*—The rule of the White Huns in this century was shaken by a rising of native princes against Mihiragula, "The Attila of India." Then the Turks, who now come upon the scene by defeating the Ephthalites on their

recruiting grounds by the Oxus, gave the dynasty the *coup de grâce*. It is very probable however that, few as the Huns may have been, they added valuable enough ingredients to the native Indian population.

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*Persia*.—This century in Persia opens with the rule of Kavadh, described as a vigorous ruler. He was rather unorthodox however, favouring (*mirabile dictu*!) a “communistic” sect.<sup>1</sup> But this again may have been a “political gesture” more than anything else, so as to make headway alike against Magian priests and recalcitrant nobles, who were adjured to renounce luxury and give away their superfluous wealth! Kavadh’s son, Chosroes I, was as orthodox as could be desired (perhaps to spite his parent), and massacred the communists while his father was still on the throne. So Zoroastrianism in its absolutist form was re-established and the Christians once more banned. Chosroes, however, seems to have been enlightened in other directions, greatly reforming the system of imperial taxation. But, no more than his predecessors, could he refrain from fighting Byzantium. Despite transient successes, always there was a return to the *status quo ante bellum*. At first Chosroes leagued himself with the Turks referred to in the above section on India, in order to get the better of the Ephthalites. But he found that Byzantium could also play the game of distant alliances, and the Turkish khans turned upon the Persians intended thus to be caught between the hammer and the anvil. Political and religious complications followed, but, in the end of the century, Chosroes II “the conqueror,” grandson of the first Chosroes, was seated on the throne, from which events were to hurl him to his grave.

*Byzantium*.—This is reckoned the most “brilliant” period in Byzantine history, but the effulgence was bought at a terrible price. It is the age of Justinian and Theodora, and the great generals Belisarius and Narses. Justinian reigned from A.D. 527 to 565. He was of barbaric descent and of a “Slavonic” race, it is believed. It is as a legislator that Justinian is most favourably known to us to-day. The boiling down and clarifying of the uncoördinated mass

<sup>1</sup> It is alleged to have included community of wives—an idea which raises the gorge of even modern Socialists.

of maxims, precepts, ordinances, and the like which he ordered certainly does him credit. Of course, he only set his seal upon what his committees had painfully redacted, and the result may have been of considerable benefit in some ways, though no system can ever be so simple that he who runs may read and lawyers reap profit without loss or chagrin to clients. But it has always happened in history that some man, or some set of experts whom he instructed (or may have inspired to some extent), gets credit for simplified reassertions of fundamental things which no nation should ever allow to get into such mortal confusion. Praise of the legal reformer, therefore, always involves deep-seated blame in some other direction. It should also be noted that Justinian's "Digest," deep as is the impression which it made after its publication, never yet kept any state from utter confusion in its laws, nor can it be proved that it helped rather than hindered by its sacrosanct character any work of reform when it *did* happen to be attempted.<sup>1</sup> In other respects Justinian is pictured to us as rapacious and bigoted, fostering financial corruption rather than rooting it out, and utterly intolerant of every heresy except that apparently held by his consort Theodora.<sup>2</sup> Whether that empress was as bad as the spiteful Procopius makes out is now held to be very doubtful, for once more, as with Tiberius and others, the literary craft and luck may be all on the one side. Justinian was great also in war, but through his generals of course. Belisarius, who may have been a Slav like his master, achieved as extraordinary results with small military resources as any soldier in history. The Vandal kingdom in Africa went down like a house of cards before him, while his campaigns in Italy and in other directions are models of maximum results with minimum means. It seems not to be the case that he was reduced to beggary and blinded, and craved "an obole for Belisarius" in the streets of Constantinople. Narses, who was a eunuch, and of Armenian or Persian descent, was perhaps even greater

<sup>1</sup> The reader may appreciate this point all the better when it is repeated that it is a lawyer who makes the avowal.

<sup>2</sup> It is alleged that Justinian in the end of his life lapsed into a "heresy" of his own in favouring "Aphthartodocetism," regarding which the reader had better consult an Encyclopædia.



as a strategist than Belisarius. When he had taken over the command in Italy he caught the Franks in one of the most terrible "trap-battles" known in history, and it is not improbable that only eighty of his 18,000 perished, while only five men out of 30,000 on the other side escaped.<sup>1</sup> But, highly gilded as Justinian's reign is by his famous commanders, his general policy exhausted the country as much as that of Louis XIV did France in his time. Each *roi soleil* achieved glory at the expense of popular misery. But, of course, without the virtual backing of the nation the potentates would have been powerless. Let it never be forgotten that "the people" are to blame as well as their rulers.

*Italy.*—Despite the disruption wrought by the barbarians, it has already been sufficiently emphasised that the *ethnos* of each country remained substantially what it had been before the intrusions. In any case, since "Rome" had ceased to be a political category we shall now take up the regional view of things, and deal with western events henceforward in their distinct enough geographical settings.

Theodoric the Ostrogoth, who began his reign at the end of the fifth century, ruled in Italy with remarkable success for the first twenty-six years of the succeeding era. It is probable that "Germanism" was of practically no account in his administration, and that any modifications of Latinism were on lines that were novel rather than Teutonic. In any case, it is seen that a really capable man can do a great deal for a country on substantially peaceful lines, with imperialism not renounced, but yet diluted in a fashion far too rare in human history. Though Theodoric is blameworthy for his execution of Boëthius and Symmachus, we cannot tell how far his judgment was warped by Popish and Byzantine intrigues in the terribly complicated political game that still continued. Justinian, who came to the throne the year after Theodoric died, considering that the whole disrupted west should be reunited from Constantinople, sent Belisarius and Narses into Italy to vindicate the Byzantine cause. Then indeed the feats of arms that brought renown to the generals and their masters wrought all too manifest anguish to the peoples of the central Mediterranean

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<sup>1</sup> A good account of this battle is given in Oman's *Art of War*.

peninsula. The eunuch Narses, who seems to have been as great a miser as a strategist, drained Italy dry of its economic resources. When he was recalled by an insulting message from the Empress Sophia insinuating that he should go spin wool with the women, he is said to have replied "I will spin her such a hank that she will not find the end of it in her lifetime." Thereupon, it is alleged, he let the Lombards loose upon Italy. They were barbarians compared with the Goths, and their greater numbers and heavier Germanic methods weighed grievously upon the land, apart from their eternal fisticuffs with other alien exploiters. Though they gave their name to Italy's richest province it is probably true to say that they degraded it rather than wrought the "regeneration" imagined in the Teutomania that prevailed before the world war, and that has so deeply discredited the gospel according to Gobineau, Carlyle, and their pupils.

*France.*—It has already been pointed out that France is a very distinct "geographical unit." To this is to be attributed the fact that, despite its extraordinary diversity of races, it had a greater unity than any other European nation at the beginning of the Roman conquest—greater perhaps even than the never quite unified Greece. Easier held by the Romans because of the lie of the land, and wealthiest of the European states, it played a chief part in the imperial system. And, though the break-up of the western section of the empire left it specially liable to attack from the Germanic barbarians, it lay in the nature of the case that it could become readily centralised, even in very unsettled conditions. So it tended towards a political symmetry more marked than in any other member of the western empire. This explains why Clovis and his sons carved out a kingdom commensurate with the well-known "natural frontiers" of the country. The disunion that came about among the Merovingians was far more dynastic than geographical. It certainly looks odd to us now that a royal stock could partition out provinces among its members with no more thought for the peoples involved than if they were so many cattle destined for different fairs. But so it was in the days of the golden-haired Merovingians, who posted on in their ox-waggons through crimes which out-Herod Herod until they landed in

utter imbecility. In the end of the sixth century France, geographically one, is being pulled to pieces by a dynasty "which heaps Lady Macbeth on Nero and idiocy on both." Let whoever wishes to "sup full with horrors" read the only too true history of the descendants of Clovis the Frank, who certainly did *not* "regenerate" France.

*Spain.*—A large part of Spain is really African in character, as already mentioned—mainly rocky coastlands, but sandy and none too salubrious at points, high detached mountain systems, veldts as in Africa with great heat and great cold, fertile valleys with stagnant air in summer and sunken rivers of little use for navigation. But, if Spain was comparatively infertile, it was highly mineralised, and its ores were exploited in turn by the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, and Romans. It never seems to have been so generally unified as France in Roman times, although any separatism which persisted may have had an effervescent effect in making Spain the seat of the "silver age" in Latin literature. We should therefore be prepared to find that, after the Roman collapse, the natural tendencies to disunity would manifest themselves more strongly than in France. And that is what took place despite the Visigoth rule, which is a mock unity, as it would appear. Vandals, Suebi, and Goths were, like Napoleon in later times, only masters of the ground they stood on. There was no need in Spain to purposely divide political spoils as in Merovingian France. Even the appearance of unity could not be attained to as a prerequisite, and religion complicated the discord—Arians and Athanasians fighting and plotting with an intensity unknown north of the Pyrenees, with dynastic atrocities in addition as irredeemable as among the Merovingians. But, if there existed disunity amidst the mock symmetry of Gothic rule in Spain, it does not necessarily follow that things were worse socially than under a centralisation which has always had so much of the artificial in Iberia. But, so far as we can judge with the scanty material at our disposal, the pulse of Civilisation in Spain was rather low in the sixth century.

*Britain.*—Until the discovery of America, Britain was literally the end of the world for the peoples of the eastern hemisphere. What stock the ancient Britons belong to

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we cannot say. All that seems certain is that there were many different races in the island at the time of the landing of the Romans. Remote as the island was it was more manageable for the Romans than central Germany with its more difficult forests, bogs, and heaths. In any event the Roman impression in England and the lowlands of Scotland was very considerable, though Ireland remained inviolate, whether or not to its benefit we cannot say. Roman Britain, however, may never be reconstituted on any broad foundation, and must perhaps be left a haunt for the "historical imagination." And it only now comes into the picture as a rapidly rebarbarising area. The "groans of the Britons" in consequence of the ravages of the Picts and Scots have already been referred to, and a hint given as to the descent of the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons on the Romanised natives, weak because of their relative culture. To what extent the already mixed blood of the Britons was diluted by the advent of the Germanic pirates we cannot say. One thing we may safely conclude—that, since the invaders merely shifted along a line of latitude, they did not enter an essentially different climate, like the hordes who dipped south, and may therefore not have been weeded out with the same rigour. Relatively, therefore, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes, and Normans may have made a greater ethnic impression than Alans, Vandals, Gepidæ, Goths, Lombards, and the like. *A priori*, therefore, Britain, not only because of its insulation but also because of the less selective character of the climate, would become relatively *more* barbaric than any other area Romanised to an equal extent. And that is apparently what happened, things drifting into that "flocking and fighting of kites and crows" contemptuously referred to by Milton. It is only slowly, as we shall see, that this condition of things was transcended.

## THE SEVENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 600 TO 700)

*Japan.*—While we shall see that, in this century, western Europe, and especially Britain, was to become

more and more barbarian, the case was entirely different with "the Britain of the east," as Japan is sometimes called. Whereas Japan, in some earlier centuries, was the despair of the present writer, who was thankful if he could write a single sentence on the subject whether or not it were strictly relevant, in this section his difficulty is how to compress the material that now abounds. The great fact is that there was peace with the continental peoples, and, while pirates in this century were swarming over the North Sea to the destructive invasion of Britain, over the sea of Japan the Koreans and Chinese, in peaceful guise, carried to the islands not only material products, but also *ideas* of every kind destined to mould the life of the islanders on notably *constructive* lines. A hundred different things might be mentioned indicative of this did space permit. Suffice it to say that there seems to have been advance in science and art, while there was agrarian reform and general legislative progress it would appear. Great abuses, of course, must have remained, and terrible political trouble was not avoided. Indeed, before the end of the century, a struggle of unprecedented intensity broke out between two Japanese princes, and, in the end, the Fujiwara family became "Mayors of the Palace" somewhat in the same way as was to happen in Merovingian France. The population of Japan at that time appears to have been about five millions.

*China.*—China is still resurgent and aggressive in this century. A usurping emperor Yang-ti is said to have built palaces and unprofitable canals, and set up such discontent that he was assassinated. Then a general usurped the place of the former usurper, and founded what is known as the T'ang Dynasty. Though this emperor had to pay tribute to Central Asian Turks who looked dangerous, the confederacy so suddenly dissolved (as so many nomadic combinations have done) that the Chinese once more asserted their power in the heart of nomadism, extending their frontiers, if only in a very indefinite sense, to Persia and the Caspian Sea. Agriculture, commerce, and literature seem to have flourished under this dynasty. Nestorian Christians were encouraged, but, at the same time, a favourable answer was given to an ambassador from Mohammed, who had risen to power

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in Arabia. For the first time in Chinese history, too, a dowager empress laid hold of the reins of power, and showed that she could handle them as well as any man.

*India.*—In this century, after the expulsion of the barbarians, there is reintegration upon the dynastic lines determined by geography, race and religion, as in every previous case. But, though material seems to abound in the record of the Chinese pilgrim, Hsüan Tsang, and the “Deeds of Harsha,” composed by a Brahman called Bana, there was no Asoka-like expansion, nor any marked stability in the period that preceded the Mohammedan invasions, which were actually started in this century, but were not to gain force until much later.

*Persia.*—In the beginning of this century Chosroes II deserved his name of “the conqueror.” In the endless quarrel with Byzantium he came quite near Constantinople, took Antioch, Damascus and Jerusalem, and marched off with the Holy Cross to Ctesiphon. Byzantium’s day seemed to be done. But then rose up the emperor Heraclius, who, by his military genius, completely reversed the positions. He defeated the Persians on every hand, destroying the great fire-temple at Atropatene. Chosroes thereupon was deposed and slain by his son. Then came chaos for a time, but peace was concluded, the Cross restored, and old frontiers re-established in the fashion that never taught any moral to the combatants, or taught it only too late. For both Persia and Byzantium were exhausted by the struggle, and the former power was indeed to be swallowed up instantly by a force emanating from a very unlooked-for quarter—Arabia. To its consideration we now turn.

*The Saracens.*—1. Arabia is one of the most distinct “geographical units,” being bold and “massive” in its outlines like Africa, and almost deserving the name of sub-continent. It is essentially a desert country, some parts of which remain unexplored even to-day. Showers, however, fall at certain times on the east and south, while in the west morning fogs fructify the vegetation almost as efficaciously as rain. Pasture land, therefore, is not lacking, and the life of the herdsman has been followed from time immemorial, exhibiting the usual predatoriness, but on petty scales, until after Mohammed’s

day. Very early, however, local Civilisations seem to have been set up, induced by tillage and based also on mercantilism, since coffee and spices peculiar to the country seem to have been much sought after from the earliest times. The fish and pearls, too, of the Persian Gulf apparently contributed to a movement of population, with its accompanying ideas, round the maritime rim of the continent, with perhaps constant dartings towards the mysterious interior. These, however, were but blossomings of culture, inconspicuous compared with the greater manifestations all round Arabia. When the country did effectively interfere in world politics it was perhaps more in despite than because of its desert character. The points to be noted about Arabia in the present connection are that it is about one-third the size of Europe, but much more "continental," being heavy and massive in build like Africa, and largely desert like the greater land. Arabia, indeed, has been called "North Africa in little." About one-third of the country is unmitigated desert, some of which remains yet unexplored; the seasonal rains give rise to pasturage over considerable areas through which the Bedouins roam; the fertile valleys and oases form only a fraction of the total area. Arabia has thus always been one of the least densely peopled countries, never perhaps nourishing more than five million people at a time. At once, therefore, it will be seen that the country was not, as is too frequently believed, an *officina gentium* from which swarms of warriors emerged for centuries to the conquest of territory from Malaysia to the Straits of Gibraltar. *Directing power* certainly emanated from the peninsula, but the movement, like most other imperial manifestations, consisted more in the *organisation* of outside energy than in the exploitation of superabounding native forces. And not only was native energy strictly limited in its resources, but, before Mohammed's time, it was highly stultified as regards mass movement by the nature of the environment. The inward deserts of Arabia and the general lie of the land give the country quite different outlooks north, east, and south towards Asia, Europe, and Africa. In the vast quadrangle the few dispersed communities had not much in common, and were pulled in different

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directions by the facts of geography and economics. The mercantile communities of the Persian Gulf had no strict *liaison* with those on the Red Sea. The nomads too, separated by the deserts, had not the same faculty for combining as those of inner Asia, or those even of North America in pre-Columbian times. Hence, though the Arabs raided outside the peninsula, it was on an inconsiderable scale, and predaciousness took the form rather of Bedouin against Bedouin, with plundering of civilised caravans at every chance. For, despite the difficulties of the interior, there was a considerable mercantilist movement in the peninsula induced by the *recherché* character of its products—spices, camels, and horses of classic renown. Commerce and agriculture, however, were too feeble to set up any political centralisation in the country, despite the relative homogeneity<sup>1</sup> of the native races, and the land was not only given up to tribalism in Mohammed's day, but also lapsed back into it after the first great expansive fits were over. The problem, then, as regards Arabia is not only how did the country go in for expansion at all, but, more particularly, why was the expansion accomplished so swiftly, to say nothing of the accompanying brilliance? Here are the suggestions offered now.

2. Mohammed was a native of Mecca, a sun-bleached town depending mainly upon *entrepôt* trade, because its sterile soil admitted of practically no agriculture. The prophet belonged to a branch of the Koreish tribe, which had become supreme in Mecca, we know not when nor how. But, though he was of noble enough descent judged by the standards of the country, he was poor, and, as an orphan, had to depend upon the protection of his blood brethren, whose care for him does not seem to have hindered a considerable amount of hardship. Naturally he took to trade, managing with conspicuous success the caravan of the widow Kadijah, who was considerably his senior, but whom he married, and thereby gained in influence in the community. Though

<sup>1</sup> The reader should, however, note that there is a considerable racial variety in Arabia as elsewhere, the "Semitic" form of speech probably masking considerable ethnic differences in a country whose position at the junction of the old-world continents allowed much intermixture from the first.



Mohammed appears to have been a well-travelled man for those times, he seems to have been quite illiterate, and had fanciful enough notions of things beyond his immediate ken. That he was an epileptic is not certain. How he came to occupy himself with religious questions we do not know, and can only surmise that he was largely influenced by the systems that impinged upon Arabia from every side. One thing is certain. If it were the desert whose uniformity induced his monotheism, it had done that neither for his own people up to his time nor for any other people of whom we have a record. As already noticed, deserts are perfectly consistent not only with polytheism but also with actual fetichism, and many Arabs are declared still to be in the latter state despite their monotonous wastes and the Koranic dogma. Mohammed's very objection to his own people was that they were polytheistic—desert or no desert. It is also to be noted that monotheistic ideas cropped out in nearly all races and countries tending towards Civilisation, whatever the nature of the environment.<sup>1</sup> If the multitude has difficulty in reaching towards uniformity of thought, rare individuals may attain to it, and perhaps be banned rather than blessed by the crowd in consequence if they shake up old customs. However that may be, the groundwork of Mohammed's creed was the oneness of God, whose ultimate<sup>2</sup> prophet he alleged himself to be. The claim to special inspiration is no more singular than the conception of unity. In all ages, and among all communities, individuals have laid claim to exclusive power in supernatural parley, as already observed. The difficulty, therefore, is not so much to explain the apparition of the prophet as to account for the particular impression which he may leave behind him. The Koran seems to indicate that Mohammed had his forerunners in Arabia itself who failed where he succeeded. Why?

3. However unoriginal Mohammed may have been in his fundamental ideas, he was essentially a *reformer* as regards the society of his time. As such he was despised

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<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, in Egypt under King Amenhotep, as already mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> He admitted the claims of some historic forerunners, but insisted that he was the final portent.

and rejected of men and mocked at by the women, the "female musicians" upon whom he had his revenge later. He deserves all the credit that belongs at all times to the attacker of vested interests with their more or less corrupt or petrifying influence upon society. He not only preached the unity of God against idolatry, but also argued for the cause of the weak against the strong, the protection of orphans against rapacity, protested against the widow being a chattel in heirship, and of the slave as a mere chattel in society. Admirable as these ideas may have been in their time, it is to be feared that it was not their power which electrified Arabia and sent it forth to the conquest of territory vaster than that of the Roman Empire in area, and acquired in a fraction of the time consumed in that grand historical process. If monotheism had an inherent power of conquest the Jews should have prevailed long before Mohammed's day, while social reform ideas, applicable mainly to the somewhat primitive society of Arabia but reached earlier in other nations, cannot account for an engulfing movement that searched the central shores of the old world from Malaysia to the Straits of Gibraltar. It is sometimes said that Mohammed's lubricious conception of heaven (which was but a projection of his own intense sensuality) made rapidly for his kingdom upon earth. But this is very doubtful. In the first place he had converts before he seems to have elaborated his conception of the future life. In the next place his celestial seraglio, though it did not leave women out of account, parked them off from men in his paradise. And, though women may lack in religious initiative, they are more devout naturally than men, and their influence upon religion is more persistent in the conservative sense. It is very unlikely therefore that paradisaical notions, practically monopolised only for males, could not only have carried Arabia off its feet but also the many other countries quickly overrun by the followers of the Prophet. All the races involved cannot have been lured by the sheer lubricity of the case, judging by the number of sensuous enough races who have remained quite untouched by this appeal. And it must be remembered that, in mundane matters, Mohammedanism rather limited sensuousness in for-

bidding the use of wine, while imposing strict regularity of observances in prayer and fasting, which could not but be irksome to such undisciplined communities as the Arabs. In fine, there is really nothing to suggest that the Islamic uprising had its inspiration in a sudden emergence from polytheism into monotheism with particular embroideries which electrified Arabia and all the peripheral lands, and that a sudden unparalleled "fanaticism" accounted for the Saracenic success. The evidence seems to point to the conclusion that the first Mohammedans were far less fanatical than the later believers. Some Arabs who joined in the movement evidently remained unconvinced to the end, including Mohammed's own protector, Abu Talib. Fanaticism, indeed, accounts for nothing. For the reader should bear in mind that the world of Civilisation at that time was suffering from anything but religious indifference. The malady, indeed, was rather too much fanaticism than too little in the countries surrounding Arabia, which had more august and more highly organised systems. Indeed, it was the very hatred of sects within the bounds of a common religion that smoothed the path of the Arabs to conquest in nearly every direction.<sup>1</sup> In fact it was probably less the Arabs' own religious ardour that carried them to conquest than the fanaticism of their opponents embodying itself in irreconcilable schisms. But it may be well to follow up this clue in connection with others to which it is organically related.

4. The Arabs, like every other people, were aggressive by instinct. Indeed the circumstances of their life made them unusually predacious, although their environment turned their spoliating energy mainly in upon themselves. Though the Arabs raided the neighbouring lands it was always upon an inconsiderable scale. The country, indeed, was more butted in upon than it butted out until

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<sup>1</sup> In this connection Coulanges makes an instructive statement in his *Mémoire sur l'île de Chio* which it is apposite to quote here: "It is no exaggeration to say that the Greeks [in Chios] preferred the turban of a Turk to the hat of a cardinal. Between two religions the distance is too great for animosities to become too much quickened. But two sects closely allied in belief touch each other at too many points; comparison is too easy, discussion too inevitable, pretensions too keen for an implacable hatred not to fill the heart."

Mohammed's day—Persians, Romans, Byzantines, but Abyssinians especially, fraying the margins of the great lone land. With such relatively abundant nomadism and mercantilism in the peninsula, which attuned even agriculture to the predacious key, the only thing which prevented Arabia imperialising, as every neighbouring community had done, was her incoherence, which was due to her tribalism, which, in turn, was determined by climate. With such splendid raw material available it was simply a case of finding the requisite nucleating power—the genius who could organise the latent motives for expansion in the shape of conquest and plunder to the utmost bounds of the political horizon. It is here suggested that Mohammed formed the nucleus of this centralising force as clearly as Attila who preceded him or Ghenghis Khan and Tamerlane who followed in his footsteps—all, however, without any religious predatoriness, which was thus perhaps more an “accident” than a necessity of the expansive process. Plunder, at any rate, was a cardinal motive in the Saracenic campaigns from the beginning. Even if it be the case that Mohammed at first did not think of rearing an earthly kingdom,<sup>1</sup> but only a conversion in view of an imminent day of judgment which was in the air of other religions, circumstances soon forced upon him the necessity of centralising in politics as he unified in religion. His absolutist religion was quite evidently inconsistent with the immemorial tribalism of his native land, which would have subverted him had he not contrived to subvert it. On the grounds of pure disinterested reform it is a million chances to one that he never would have succeeded. But, in instituting the alternative of tribute to conversion and himself showing how the tribute could be exacted, he pointed the way to infinite plunder through political centralisation, and the path was opened up by extremely capable caliphs and soldiers who had really more to do with the process of expansion than the Prophet himself. Such surpassing capacity is another historical “accident” in connection with the movement. Mohammed's own political and military abilities were not called upon to any great extent. His battles were small affairs, of no

<sup>1</sup> *Cambridge Mediæval History*, ii. 327.

more intrinsic consequence perhaps than the fisticuffs of Albanian and Scotch clans in times past. But, in Khalid, "the sword of God," Mohammed seems to have possessed a first-rate military genius with almost equally capable colleagues, who handled successfully immeasurably greater issues than those of their master himself. Very probably the Arabian generals invented new ideas in strategy and tactics under the same dire need for improvisation as beset French commanders at the time of the Revolution, and may have succeeded equally well, although we remain in gross enough ignorance of early Saracenic military history. And those military talents were backed up by administrative qualities of the highest order in the persons of the earliest caliphs. This galaxy of talent accounts in no small degree for the rapid rise and spread of Islam. With all that, however, it is possible that the success might have been inconsiderable but for relative social weakness existing in the systems surrounding Arabia. Persia and Byzantium had been constantly fighting each other for all the illusory ends that exhaust rather than enrich empires. Behind the glittering façades of these absolutist powers, therefore, there was real weakness due not only to vicious militarism, but also to the schismatic fanaticism already referred to. They, too, were as absolutist in their religious pretensions as the Mohammedans, but they were a trifle more logical in the application of their conceptions. Dissent, however minute, could not be tolerated by them. Hence persecutions on almost every hand, which no amount of money could buy off. Into an eastern world so constituted came the Islamic evangel with its sensuous heaven, its virtual proclamation of freedom for the slave who would follow the new prophet, and, above all, of religious toleration at a worldly price fixed strictly according to scale.<sup>1</sup> On the whole, it must have been a most attractive gospel as so presented, appealing as it did to so many sides of human nature. Little wonder, then, that Mohammedanism, when

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<sup>1</sup> Reclus states (*L'Homme et la Terre*) that the Arabs, in their aversion to private property in land, inculcated a better system of economic reward for the husbandman in that connection. As the writer has been unable to get any clear light on this aspect of the case, he has refrained from positively advancing what must have been a very strong motive on the part of many to embrace Islam if it really existed.

it had struggled outside the peninsula<sup>1</sup> after the Prophet's death, gained ground so quickly in Mesopotamia, in Syria, in Egypt and in Persia, and right along Africa to Spain. In some cases it had a bloodless procession, gates being opened by dissidents who hated their co-religionists more than they feared the infidel. Without any disrespect, therefore, to the religious aspect of the case it is here suggested as scientifically accurate to say that the expansion is to be viewed less in terms of devotion than of pretentiousness, plunder, "luck," and a toleration which more than made up in political success for what it lacked in logic. So much for the rise of the system. What now as to its full-orbed manifestations and "place in history" ?

5. In scanning the features of Saracenic expansion the reader, as already indicated, must constantly bear in mind that, after a certain stage had been reached, it was not so much Arab flesh and blood which achieved the conquests as Semitic *directing power* stimulating outside talent. It was so, of course, with the Roman conquest before it. But the Italian peninsula, with its relatively greater population, sent out even more native warriors and administrators. So much the more credit, therefore, probably belongs to the Saracenic centre, which radiated its powers concentrically over areas perhaps even vaster than those owing allegiance to the eternal city.<sup>2</sup> Certainly Arab blood may have injected itself into the veins of the nations from the Malay Peninsula to the Pillars of Hercules, but it must have been as a drop in the bucket compared with the amount of native energy affected. It was therefore far less (almost infinitely less) an *ethnic* disturbance that ensued than a revolution in the world of *ideas*, the

<sup>1</sup> It seems not to be the case that the whole of Arabia was converted at the time of Mohammed's death (*Cambridge Mediæval History*, vol. ii.), which was indeed the signal for considerable lapsing on the part of sections not yet hypnotised by plunder outside. The movement might have foundered completely but for its reconstitution by Mohammed's capable successors on the centralising lines of plunder, as indicated by the whole circumstances of the case.

<sup>2</sup> The Turks, too, in later times were originally but very small bands of warriors, and their expansion was far less in terms of the multiplication of pure "Turanians" than of the imposition and operation of a predatory system directed by aliens who got swamped in the populations they commanded, while the system itself persisted as much through Christian vices as Turkish virtues.

supersession of old conceptions, the vivifying of others, and the injection of much fresh if not entirely original thought—one of those commotions which nearly always imply intellectual progress. The Arabs themselves, rich only in bardic lore, had not any stores of thought wherewith to endow the world they disturbed. They were ignorant rather than learned, and the more fanatical among them may, from the first, have tried to cramp all knowledge within the confines of the Koran. It is now agreed that the Caliph Omar did not really authorise the destruction of the library at Alexandria, which seems to have gone up in flames before his time. But his alleged motive was typical, if not of him, at least of many later Mohammedans—that if the books contradicted the Koran they were impious, and if they confirmed it they were superfluous. Happily such prepossessions were rare in later Saracenic times. Some pure-blooded Arabs, coming with fresh minds to old lore, could appreciate it to the utmost, and, in their relative freedom from prejudice, could teach new valuations to the possessors of the learning themselves, many of whom were sitting upon their wealth as unconscious of its potency as savages of the power of the coal beneath their feet. Thus the Saracens (including of course many erstwhile Christian and Mazdean minds) absorbed much Grecian lore which simply remained mummified in Byzantium. Borrowing also from Persia and India the Arabs worked up a new intellectual compost which, in some respects, excelled in civilised efficiency anything attained to up to that time. In chemistry especially they developed things to such an extent that this most potent of modern sciences may be said to root most broadly in their achievement. Really brilliant Civilisations, therefore, rose in nearly every Islamic country radiating from Arabia as a result, perhaps, not so much of the positive intellectual gifts brought by the sons of the desert as by their negative work in destroying encrusted prejudices and permitting fresh intellectual valuations and appreciations throughout much of the realm of thought, which tends to become periodically foreclosed by the masterfulness of customs and cults. The Saracens, just because they were at first less fanatical than their religion was dogmatic, set up fresh currents

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of criticism which ultimately died down in their case also until they became a byword of unprogressiveness. It became almost a dogma in European thought that the Saracens were unprogressive by nature, in virtue, it was supposed, of their "Semitism." That theory is not only useless but harmful. It fails wholly to account for the fact that Civilisation reached high-water mark in many of the Mohammedan areas at a time when the greater part of Europe was steeped in ignorance and sticky with barbarity. The Dark Ages of Christianity, indeed, coincide with the Golden Age of Islam. And, if Christian Europe could revive in culture through the liquefaction if not the absolute renunciation of dogma, there is no reason in the world why, through the operation of that and similar conditions, the Islamic areas should not also have their rebirth. Of course the Saracenic countries varied considerably as regards the qualities and features of their Civilisations, and the reader should scrutinise their characteristics in the light of the various permanent elements of the *milieux* already treated of in Arabia, India, Persia, Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt, &c. On the whole, the Saracenic Civilisation was of a *trade-wind* type, stimulating therefore in its essential climatic character, but naturally depending fundamentally upon irrigation for its productivity. Wherever agriculture is resorted to in such parsimonious conditions, tillage tends to be of the most intensive type. Hence, under the relatively free stimuli applied by the Arabs despite their tributary system, there was an enormous agricultural development in their times. And there was an almost equally strong mercantilist movement which the religious *liaison* seems to have done a good deal to foment, while the seas and oceans which fringed the culture permitted of transport from end to end and side to side in quite intense supplementary fashion. In short, what we may, broadly speaking, call the Saracenic Civilisation is one of the most highly interesting manifestations of the human spirit. It probably reached its culmination in the manifestations in Spain. That country, though unified in its character as a peninsula, is so cut up by the run of the mountains that political unity has always been as much by way of force as conviction. Hence, because of



its divisiveness, it was the plaything of Phœnician, Carthaginian, Roman and Goth, all conquerors more than colonists. Not so, apparently, with the Saracenic invaders. Whether or not there was a woman in the case leading to the invasion under Tarik, there was at any rate religious discontent on the part not only of some Christians but more especially of the Jews scattered throughout the kingdom. It was apparently their dissidence which opened up a way to the less intolerant Saracens. The hollowness of the Gothic hold is witnessed by the fact that a single battle seems to have engulfed the Teutonic system, while it took seven hundred years and innumerable combats for the resurgent Christians to extirpate the infidels from their soil. That indicates to what a profound extent Saracenic conceptions, or blood, or both combined, had laid hold of the peninsula. Looking to what has already been said as to the fewness of the Arabs, the invasion is to be viewed as one of Berbers rather than Semites. But to what extent the Moors imposed themselves ethnically on Iberia we can never know. Culturally, however, there is no doubt on the subject. Agriculture, commerce, science, knowledge generally were developed as never before nor since in the history of the peninsula. Says Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole ("The Moors in Spain," pref.): "For nearly eight centuries under her Mohammedan rulers, Spain set to all Europe a shining example of a civilised and enlightened state. Her fertile provinces, rendered doubly prolific by the industry and engineering skill of her conquerors, bore fruit an hundredfold. Cities innumerable sprang up in the valleys of the Guadalquivir and Guadiana. . . . Art, literature and science prospered as they prospered nowhere else in Europe. Students flocked from France and Germany and England to drink from the fountain of learning which flowed only in the cities of the Moors. The surgeons and doctors of Andalusia were in the van of science, women were encouraged to serious study, and the lady doctor was not unknown among the people of Cordova. Mathematics, astronomy, and botany; history, philosophy, and jurisprudence were to be mastered in Spain and Spain alone; the practical work of the field, the art of fortification and shipbuilding, the highest

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and most elaborate products of the loom, the graver, and the hammer, the potter's wheel and the mason's trowel were brought to perfection by the Spanish Moors."<sup>1</sup> How then did a culture capable of such special excellence suffer such a collapse?

6. It has been indicated how much was "accidental" in the formation of Islam within its own home, and how very much the economic as distinct from the purely religious motive had to do with the building-up of Mohammedanism outside Arabia, the "accidents" of Zoroastrian and Christian dissent favouring the spread of the system, as well as its own more positive merits glanced at. The fact that Arabia itself practically dropped out of the reckoning, and that Caliphates sprang up in wealthier and more strategic quarters, indicates the preponderance of the *political* compared with the purely religious aspects of the case. Dogma, however, having been established in Islam from the beginning, it was inevitable that there should be disputes as to its meaning, and that interpretations should harden into fanaticism, as is the way of all belief, secular as well as sacred. Religious disputes, partly due, of course, to political, economic, and ethnic differences, disturbed Islam from the beginning, and made the system rock at times to its foundation. What probably saved Islam from ruin was its toleration of infidelity in the midst of its own wranglings. Had the Christians been able to unite as the less theologically matured Saracens continued to do in considerable degree despite their discords, it is practically certain that Mohammedanism would never have expanded or maintained itself as it did, as

<sup>1</sup> The reason why Spain formed a specially favourable theatre for Saracenic effort probably resides in such facts as these. Though the peninsula had not such high agricultural potentialities as some countries, like Egypt and Mesopotamia, it yet had probably the *best balanced* economic development, there being great mineral resources as a foundation for mercantilism. The Berbers too, who remained unprogressive in their own country, evidently benefited enormously by the crossing of the blood and cultures which took place in Iberia—the stagnation which overtook both Spaniards and Moors later being evidently due to a drying-up of these sources of variation. In Spain, too, there was included the culture of the mountain, the plain, and the sea on a greater and, at the same time, a more intimate scale than in any other Mohammedan country. There are minor dynamic influences which the reader must work out for himself, but these seem to be the main considerations applicable to this most enticing problem.

already indicated. Even in our day when the Balkan nations could unite against the Turk it was seen how easily they could prevail against him, and how easily he could reconstitute his authority when they quarrelled—as when Adrianople was reoccupied against the Bulgarians. Christianity and Mohammedanism, viewed as systems, are strong in the measure of their adaptions to the human nature of the case. The first spread with comparative slowness from Palestine, and insinuated itself practically throughout the Roman Empire before the western collapse. August as are its claims, it remains even to-day limited in its *terrain*, and is only one of a number of religions all competing for the favour of humanity, which, it is complained, is, in the more scientific quarters, tending to drift away from religion altogether. The reason why Christianity spread westward and northward rather than to the east probably lies in the fact that the Orient had been more systematised in religious thought from time immemorial, and that the more plastic cults of the west afforded much better recruiting-grounds for a creed which is clearly seen to have systematised and adapted as it went along. Comparatively slow as was its progress, it had a start of six centuries upon Islam, and, relatively swift as was the advance of the latter along the lines of fissure in the older creeds, it lay in the nature of the case that, just as Christianity had been circumscribed by its predecessors, so it would in turn limit Islam either in virtue of its pure psychological appeal or the sheer strategical advantage due to geography. Christianity thus had a long start as regards the hinterlands of Europe, whose pulpy polytheisms were destroyed alike by the pomp of Byzantium and the terrible sword of Charlemagne. Europe thus stood pre-empted for the Cross, although it says a great deal for the offensive power of the Crescent that it should have gained footings in Sicily and Italy, and almost monopolised Iberia. But, horrible as were the wounds made in the Asiatic side of Byzantium, that power acted as a complete barrier of the eastern gates for centuries until the arrival of the Turk, who, moreover, came far too late to Islamise Europe in that quarter. A hundred years, therefore, before Charles Martel defeated the Saracens at Tours the radiative power of Islam was

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seen to have its limitations, like Christianity before it; and there is therefore not the slightest chance, if the French champion had been defeated in Gaul, that Mohammedanism would have taken Europe in the rear and muezzins would to-day be calling from mosques in Oxford, as has been hazarded.<sup>1</sup> The Saracens really countered Charles after Tours, but their offensive power was as finite as that of the Romans before them, and the "backwoods of Europe" would have defied the Saracens as effectively as they did their forerunners. Even if the Saracens had got to the Channel ports there remained the chance that the Christians would have started a reconquest, like the Spaniards, and swept them back into the Mediterranean. In fine, the theory utterly underrates the power of Christianity as a purely secular force, to say nothing whatever as to its divine claims. As it solidified in Europe, and Islam in Africa and in Asia, it was inevitable that these two great religions should come into sharper and sharper conflict along their immense frontiers. Of course the struggle was not purely religious. Europe had need of the *recherché* products of the Orient, and economic and imperialistic motives mingled with the purely religious in the long, groping conflicts. It is to be noted that the nomadic Turks, drifting from inner Asia into the more refined Saracenic centres, tended to debase these, and, with their greater intolerance in both religion and trade, set the teeth of Europe effectually on edge. There is therefore nothing really mysterious in the origin of the Crusades. Europe and Asia had been constantly invading each other, not because they were respectively "European" and "Asiatic," but simply because the tides of imperialism surged backwards and forwards in the channels dug by geography. There were probably more invasions of one another by Asiatic sections and by European countries than of one continent by another. It is all part of the problem of imperialism, which takes small account of geographical frontiers. The world war just ended consisted in the invasion of one part of Europe by the other, even if it

<sup>1</sup> Opinions differ as to the magnitude of the battle of Tours. The common notion is that the forces on each side were very great, the slaughter terrible, and the result "decisive" as regards world-politics. On the other hand, it is sometimes alleged that the Saracen advance was no more than a raid, and the consequences quite insignificant.

were with a view to world domination on Germany's part. In a quite valid sense, however, we can speak of Europe and Asia as being "polarised" against each other, judging by the historical manifestations. The Trojan war was perhaps an early example, with love and plunder as its motives in proportions that we cannot determine. Persia coveted Greece in pure imperialism without any woman being in the case. The Spartans filibustered in Asia in a similar spirit, and set an example to Alexander the Great, who perhaps Europeanised less than he was Orientalised. In any case here were recurrent tides of simply secular force which continued to pulsate through history. Rome sought out Parthia, and Parthia tried to be avenged upon Rome, while Byzantium struggled with renascent Persia in exhausting bouts which gave the Arabs one of their greatest chances, as already noticed. The Saracen offensive against Europe, being so much more explicitly religious than earlier efforts, was really a Crusade, which set the example later to the Christians roughly (and never perfectly) co-ordinated by their creed. The Crusades, therefore, so far from being mysterious or *sui generis*, were really a prolongation of the strife of peoples in the most ancient areas of struggle, with motives perhaps changed more in form than in substance. And the results remained practically the same—a return to the *status quo ante bellum*. Just as the Saracens ultimately failed in Europe, so did the Crusaders in Asia because of the creation of essentially "eccentric" positions on both sides. The whole thing stood for a terrible waste of energy because of the violence of the contacts, the loss being only slightly redeemed by the cultural borrowings and lendings, which would have been ever so much more profitable had they taken place in peace. Though the Saracens were swept out of south central Europe and Spain, in the persons of the Turks they made most ominous headway in the Balkans. But despite the creation of this *enclave*, which remains in its elements to this hour, in so far as the contrast between Europe and Asia applies, it was the west which ultimately got the better of the east. Whatever blocking-up in the Orient was caused by the Turks was more than compensated for by the discovery of the seaway round Africa and the New World across the Atlantic. For the

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exploitation of these gains maritime Europe, with its greater resources, was infinitely better suited than the Saracenic east, which was completely "surrounded" by the circumnavigation of Africa. What between Turkish oppression in the Saracenic centre and Christian covetousness and malignity round all the circumference, Islam was therefore doomed to decay. There was such a shifting and drying-up of the flow of things, added to political malpractice, that nothing could have prevented declension in such a world-tilt of interests, which even brought creeping paralysis upon Christian Venice, let alone in outflanked Islam. But the Arabian efflorescence (so largely "accidental," as we have seen), in the amount of science which was originated or refined as a result of the outburst from the forlorn enough peninsula, helped effectively in the making of that Europe which, in return, was so largely to unmake Islam. It is to be sincerely hoped that the science of the future will seek to benefit impartially all cultures alike, and that the Islamic countries will again play a notable part in forwarding the general deed of man. It is quite improbable however that, in a planet in which machinery has come to be the most potent of forces, Arabia itself will be again, even transiently, a world-force in politics. But its part may be beneficent enough, even if inconspicuous. In any event, nothing can rob Arabia of an historical renown all the more marvellous because the outburst was unexpected, largely accidental, and, perhaps, for ever incapable of repetition.

*Byzantium.*—What has been said about the Persians and the Saracens in the two preceding sections anticipates a good deal of the history of Byzantium in this century. In the beginning of the era things looked terribly black for the Greeks, and it seemed as if Chosroes would completely revenge the conquests of Alexander the Great. But the genius of Heraclius not only retrieved the situation for Byzantium, but also brought Chosroes to his grave, while, a few years later, Persia was conquered by the Saracens much more completely than by Alexander of Macedon. The Sassanid empire utterly disappeared, and the whole of Iran was engulfed in the Saracen Empire destined to stretch from Malaysia to the Pillars of Hercules in the broad band of monsoon and trade-wind climates

characteristic of the latitudes. Persia, however, as will be noted,<sup>1</sup> gave a peculiar stamp to its Islamism in religion and literature. Byzantium, though it was to suffer the loss of some of its fairest lands, was not only *not* to be completely overwhelmed like Persia, but was actually to be the great bulwark against Saracenic advance in Europe through the Balkans, which would have been the short cut into the heart of the continent. So that events sported with the heroic Heraclius even as with the conquering Chosroes. But Byzantium, better protected by the lie of the land than Persia, had also an artificial means of defence which may have proved the secret of her comparative immunity. The sieges of Constantinople by the Saracens were evidently frustrated mainly by Greek fire. We do not know exactly what the composition of this substance was, but it was practically equal to the possession of fire-arms at the time, and played a determining part in many engagements. In this century, too, Avars and Bulgars were threatening Constantinople from the north. It shows how naturally strong this seat of empire was that, handicapped by inward misrule, it yet could hold at bay the northern barbarians and the really scientific Saracens, who, however, settled themselves in Syria and in Egypt, and were marching victoriously to Morocco ere the seventh century was at an end.

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to  
700

*Italy.*—In this century the political situation in Italy remains “triangular”—the pressure of Byzantium on the one side, the Pope on the other, and the Lombards on the third. Although the Lombards gave up their Arian heresy, that did not reconcile the Papacy. That is what was to be expected considering the substantial conflict of aims which remained. It was probably this oppugnancy which caused the Lombards to codify their own law, though it was published in the Latin tongue, but with the idea of self-assertion quite apparently behind the move. It was probably the essential antagonism between the Pope and the eastern Empire which so long permitted the Lombard rule in north Italy to exist. That rule, indeed, tended to founder socially like its alien predecessors, but the *coup de grâce* could not be given to it because of the jealousies within the peninsula itself. The Lombard

<sup>1</sup> See hereafter, p. 263.

government, in so far as it did affect the life of the peninsula, may have accentuated the jealousies in question, enabling the Holy Roman Emperors, when their time came, to march to their coronations, if never long to abide in the land. But that is stated here only as a possibility. The reader will find a great deal of historical discussion as to the form and influence in Italy of Lombard rule, which was the most massive and persistent that had to be endured. It is impossible to decide, for the material does not exist whereon to form a judgment. But, in scrutinising the problem, it should always be remembered that the invaders continued to labour under a double handicap—the relative fewness of their numbers and the existence of institutions which must have competed as fiercely with any new laws attempted to be imposed, as the indurated inhabitants did with the imported physical types. With such a principle of judgment in hand, it is probable to conclude that the general impression may have been comparatively slight. On the other hand, the variations brought about may have acted as a strong stimulus to progress in whatever direction it was achieved, since advance is so much by way of the cross-fertilisation of cultures.

*France.*—In France in this century the constant tendency to a division of the spoils among the dynasts, after the manner of robbers or pirates at the conclusion of a joint adventure, continued to be countered by the natural unifying forces of the country. So we find France attaining to a certain symmetry entirely lacking in Italy and Spain. There was, however, a patrician movement ominous of developments that actually did arise. On the one hand, the nobility were refractory; on the other, a great noble tended to assert himself against both king and aristocracy. Thus evolved the “Mayor of the Palace,” who made the king a puppet, but at the expense of concessions to the nobility which induced the Feudalism that supervened later when the havoc wrought by the Norsemen upset the later Carolingian Empire. But the geographical control is still the leading clue in the history of France in this century before ethnic consolidation had been anything like completed.

*Spain.*—Catholicism was established in Spain in this century, and persecutions were instituted against both



heretics and Jews. Despite the practical anarchy of many secular potentates and not a few "priest-kings," there was evidently a certain unanimity in heresy-hunting—a pursuit which set up the same kind of dry-rot in Iberia as let the Saracens into Persia, Syria, and Egypt, and was to ensure them success in Spain the moment an assault was made.

A.D.  
600  
to  
700

*Britain.*—Following the hint formerly thrown out that Britain was a much better field for Germanic colonisation, however forcible, than the Mediterranean lands, we can understand that, while Italy, Spain, and southern France were to continue distinctly "Latin," northern France was to remain Frankish and Britain to become "Anglo-Saxon," if not in such a deep ethnical sense as has been imagined. In any event the invasive sphere of influence expanded greatly in the seventh century, penetrating to Wales and the lowlands of Scotland. To this relatively greater impression is probably due the fact that Roman law never had the weight in England that it attained to in other quarters where the Germanic races may have once been more numerous—in Italy, for instance. English law indeed, after centuries of struggle, may be said to have emerged substantially victorious against the Roman codes, which British jurists will yet praise sky-high from other points of view. The Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were, of course, very numerous, forming and re-forming on the historical horizons with the inchoate confusion of clouds. So, at least, they appear to us now. There is practically no material left for any rationalisation on grounds of race, geography, economics, or religion. It is notable, however, that Christianity laid hold of the island in this century, even if others than St. Augustine had the chief hand in the work. The faith seems to have had an easy triumph against Paganism, but how much real change of mind (at least of an intelligent character) followed it is difficult to say. One thing is certain, that the nominal spiritual unity attained to had apparently no influence whatever in bridling the political conflicts which went merrily on until the battle of Hastings put an end to the age-old tribal and provincial disturbances.

## THE EIGHTH CENTURY

(A.D. 700 TO 800)

*Japan.*—In this century the Japanese capital ceases to be shifted with each change of sovereign. For nearly eighty years the Court remained at Nara, when Kioto became the permanent metropolis. Buddhist influences are gaining strength in the land, but superstition seems to become still more grovelling at times despite the advent of the cult. It is noted in this era that women's dress is not markedly distinct from that of men, and that they even sit astraddle their horses like the stronger sex. The peasantry are believed to have led a miserable life despite all the surface signs of prosperity in consequence of the exactions of the Court and the nobility, as in pre-Revolutionary France. And there is still a "Mayor of the Palace," just as in the Merovingian empire. The Japanese population seems to have increased to about nine millions.

*China.*—In this century China had both strong and weak monarchs, some encouraging literature and learning, and others submissive to their wives or to the "Eunuchs of the Court." For Mayors of the Palace seem to have been a specially virulent political disease in this era. Despite palace troubles and barbaric menace the T'ang Dynasty seems to have been not unsuccessful, but it declined through the mysterious disease that afflicts all royal families in the end.

*India.*—In this century India is again in complete political confusion defying all elucidation, though the peoples may really have been none the worse of the absence of the never stable centralisation that strikes the eye, but implies no social well-being *per se*. The Mohammedans got into India in this century, but, as yet, it was only in the way of big raids. Though there was unparalleled religiosity in the peninsula there was no such ecclesiastical dry-rot as gave the Saracens virtually a walk-over in some parts of the Nearer East.

*The Saracens.*—Once more Persia has to step down off its historical pedestal until circumstances restore it to

its place in the gallery of world events. Unsatisfactory as is the term "Saracens," and diverse as were the countries and the cultures covered by the idea, lack of space here forces us to deal with the historical portents in the same summary and comprehensive fashion as in the case of "Rome" and "Byzantium." It has already been noticed that Arabia tended to relapse into its natural anarchy on Mohammed's death, and it was only the "accident" of a succession of capable caliphs which achieved unity under a motive of plunder and set the creed on a career of expansion at once swift and stable which makes the outburst unique in history. In this century the Saracenic civilisation is not only blooming, but still expanding along nearly the whole length and breadth of the northern trade-wind latitudes of the old world. It is, of course, possible here to deal only with the broadest features of the case. As already indicated, the homeland of the faith tended to be of comparatively little account in shaping the political destiny of things. Quite naturally Persia on the one hand and Asia Minor on the other could not but be diversely active under the new dispensation, with Arabia interfering less by mass-weight than by prestige, even as did Rome under the Popes. So Persia originated and developed her Shi'ism less as an intellectual variation than as a political protest rooting in a dynastic preference for the caliphate of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet and of his successors. And to-day in Persia the preferential claim flames up annually into fierce dramatic representations centring round the massacres of the stock viewed as the only legitimate one. But the Syrian candidates, with their capital in Damascus, had greater resources at their command to begin with, and so we have the supremacy of the Ommayyads which lasted from A.D. 661 to 750. It has, however, a highly intricate history, in which the various geographical, ethnic, and economic controls seem utterly confused or entirely disappear. The record is prejudiced too, as coming largely from Abbasid sources. When, in the middle of the eighth century, the Ommayyads were overcome, probably because Iran was gaining in general strength against Syria, a capital was founded "newer" than Byzantium, but which has since tended to rival it in renown. This was Bagdad.

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Situated on the Tigris, it was the *entrepôt* for all the products from the east and the still superabounding fertility of the Mesopotamian plains which it commanded, and the resources of the western world drawn eastward in the endless exchanges. Little wonder, then, that Bagdad<sup>1</sup> flourished mightily in a system which, despite certain impediments, yet stood for a freer circulation of commodities in a larger area than perhaps the world had seen up to that time. Spain, which was conquered in this century, could have its enormous mineral resources exploited and passed freely along the great Saracenic corridor to work out exchanges with even India and China. For, in earlier Islam, relative freedom both in intelligence and economics, in mind and in matter, induced a general Civilisation of extremely high character, too little appreciated still perhaps in western thought. Let the reader therefore never forget that the collapse in western European Civilisation was more than compensated by the Saracenic efflorescence, and that the tide of culture in the world never seriously retreated as a whole, since, when Islam tended to become unprogressive, Europe resumed the onward march which never halted thereafter. Let the reader also note, as regards the Moorish invasion of Spain, that although there may have been a woman in the case it had nothing substantially to do with Iberian destinies, since the conquest was just a phase of the general expansiveness of the culture, making capital of the ethnic instability in Spain in the midst of ecclesiastical dry-rot. The Moors were few in numbers to begin with, and never could have succeeded but for the essential anarchy that prevailed in the peninsula at the time. But, as already noted, the Saracenic invasion seems to have become a real colonisation leading to results more brilliant perhaps than in any other land where the muezzins called the faithful to prayer.

*Byzantium.*—In this century Byzantium suffers from such terrible distractions that the marvel is how the state continued as a large as well as a distinct economy. Survival seems explicable only on the ground of the country,

<sup>1</sup> The most illustrious Caliph of Bagdad was Haroun-ar-Rashid, whose name to the west suggests the finest romanticism of the *Arabian Nights*.

with its marvellous capital, holding interior lines whose bastions were defensible by relatively small numbers strong in being able to take their enemies in detail. The Bulgarians were a terrible menace in the north, but not only did the triple walls hold good against their barbarous attacks, but the enemy was also heavily defeated before the end of the century. And the spiritual rawness of the barbarians soon made them a complete prey to the august Byzantine system. While savage people like the tropical denizens of Africa and America, held down so largely by climate, may remain fetishistic despite the play of the most potent religious systems of Civilisation, the case is different with the people of the temperate zones who are capable of mental advance *en masse*, or, at least, have leaders who can so mould the national *form* of religion that its establishment may consist quite well with much real paganism among the lower orders. So the Bulgarians, like the Goths and other barbarians, were to feel their strength going from them mysteriously, as did Samson when his locks were cut. A really more dangerous, because more civilised, trouble was represented by the Saracens. The siege of Constantinople, which began in A.D. 717, was perhaps frustrated by Greek fire as already indicated. But the Islamic trouble was not to subside as in the Bulgarian case, and Haroun-ar-Rashid invaded the Empire at the end of the century. For here there was no spiritual rawness which could be dissolved by the solar force of a great system as wreaths of snow melt off suddenly in a Siberian or Canadian spring. Though Mohammedan Monotheism was simpler than Byzantine Trinitarianism, it was as refractory and finished in its dogmatism and ritual as Christianity, and the two religions were to continue confronting each other as "incensed and mighty opposites," as Shakespeare puts it in another connection. And a certain territorial equilibrium also might be said to settle down after this century. The age of great adventures ceased, for the Saracens at least, and mutual raiding rather took the place of combats *à outrance*, until the Seljuks and still fiercer Ottomans came upon the scene. The third great trouble of Byzantium was internal and religious. In the beginning of the eighth century Leo III, known as the "Isaurian," started the campaign against image

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worship. The tendency of all religious systems being towards elaboration, if only very slowly, it is very natural that intelligences inclining to simplicity and enamoured with their conceptions of "primitive purity" should manifest Protestant principles, if only sporadically. Iconoclasm in Byzantium had probably its rock bottom in this tendency. But it is also probable that the Isaurian, who belonged to Syria, was influenced by Islamic Monotheism, albeit he was the man who first stemmed the tide of Saracen conquest in his quarter. In any event Leo was a great ruler, and his appearance reinvigorated a state that seemed to be *in articulo mortis*. On the other hand, the image-breaking campaign which he originated kept the state less strong than it might have been by alienating not only crowds of women, but also outside sympathies, as in southern Italy. It also intensified palatial malignity, and gouging out of eyes became a favourite method of mutilation in this century.

*Italy.*—In this century the triangular pressure of Lombard, Pope, and Byzantine before referred to as regards Italy was to be modified as regards the last force in the era now in hand. The west repudiated the Iconoclasm of the east, and Byzantine influence disappeared. But, of course, it was only to give place to pressures of another kind. The Mohammedans, scouring the Mediterranean from their southern bases and their Iberian enclave, were looking with covetous eyes on Sicily. Covetousness was however translated into action in another quarter. In the beginning of the eighth century, when the "degenerate" Visigothic dynasty in Spain was overthrown from the outside by the Arabs, the no less effete Frankish line was being superseded by the Mayors of the Palace. In A.D. 715 the renowned Charles Martel—the "Hammer"—came to the front as chief. Enough has already been said as to Charles' triumph over the Moors at Poitiers. If that victory against the Saracens be exaggerated it at least gave a tremendous fillip to Charles' house. Charles himself seems to have been rather anti-clerical, and shied at suggestions by the Pope that he should lend a hand in Italy against the Lombards. Not so his son Pepin "the Short." He put an end to the Merovingian farce by cutting off the locks of the imbecile Childeric III (who was immured perman-

ently in a monastery<sup>1</sup>) and had himself crowned king. Shortly afterwards he yielded to the beckonings of the Pope, and no doubt also to very strong native promptings, and invaded Italy with his Franks, still extremely doughty warriors despite the degeneracy of the royal line. But, of course, the pure Franks might by this time be relatively few in numbers. They were at any rate more than a match for the still more diluted Lombards. So Pepin twice crossed the Alps, and "donated" the Pope with the territory wrested from the Lombards with results that still have their influence in European politics. Still more portentous was the crowning of Charlemagne as the "Holy Roman Emperor." But neither his powers nor those reserved by the Papacy were defined, and this led to spectrality in thought and confused violence in politics, which happily torment the minds of historians now rather than the general body politic as of yore. Striking, however, as is Charlemagne's coronation to us now, it probably made but little stir at the time. So at least says Coulanges, one of the greatest authorities regarding the period in question. Once more, therefore, let us be careful as to telescoping our impressions into the past.

*France.*—The eighth century in France, as already indicated, is noted for the advent of the Carolingians. If the Saracenic empire owed much to the capable caliphs who succeeded Mohammed, French history in this century is also to be explained in terms of personality. Charles Martel was followed by his son Pepin "the Short," and the latter by his son Charlemagne—great in height as well as in political stature.<sup>2</sup> But France had a natural unity that Arabia lacked, and, great as must remain the name of Charlemagne in European history, it is very probable that here again events have somewhat got out of perspective. Charlemagne ruled a very considerable territory, but its mileage was small and its population thin compared with many empires before and since, and, in particular, with the contemporary Caliphate. He had much imperial

<sup>1</sup> Childeric had been confined before the cutting off of his hair, and had only been paraded periodically in the cart drawn by oxen.

<sup>2</sup> Charlemagne had not the "superhuman" proportions sometimes attributed to him. He was a few inches over six feet—a height which is quite common and often exceeded to-day.

precedent to go by, and he, an illiterate himself,<sup>1</sup> is certainly to be praised for the encouragement which he gave to art and learning, even if soldiers ruder than himself had done more for philosophy and the fine arts. There was, however, a fury in Charlemagne's methods not unlike that of Alexander the Great, already commented on. But, unlike the Macedonian, there was no accommodation in Charlemagne's mind for more than one religion. He is therefore probably the greatest exponent of forcible conversion known to history. The Arabs even were content with tribute, failing conformity. Not so Charlemagne; baptism or death were his alternatives. So the Saxons were "converted in cohorts and baptised by brigades." He thus quite needlessly antagonised the barbarians, who would have been more efficaciously converted by civilised example than by naked force. Thus the Saxons showed a hostility to Christianity which the other Germanic races, caught within the ample folds of the creed, did not display. Paganism was needlessly made synonymous with patriotism. And the Teutons, pushed back in Central Europe, came round in their galleys through the Baltic and North Sea—hovering ominously on the French coasts while Charlemagne could still strain his eyes seawards. He is said to have been neither a great soldier nor a great politician,<sup>2</sup> though he was a very purblind imperialist with a personal morality which some pagans would have disowned. Yet, despite his shortcomings, a legendary greatness still makes him tower tremendously in history. But circumstances have perhaps exaggerated his qualities, even as they transmuted the fight at Roncesvalles into one of the most resounding battle songs in history. And yet it was but a rear-guard fight and not "great" even at that. Some men and events have posthumous luck far beyond their real merits. That at least is the suggestion now.

*Spain.*—In this century the Moors under Tarik invaded Spain and overran the country with a rapidity as remarkable as in other cases for the reasons already sufficiently

<sup>1</sup> He could read but not write.

<sup>2</sup> His "bargain" with the Pope with its dreadful legacy of endless turmoil shows this clearly enough, as does his creation of the "Ecclesiastical state" within his own dominions.



indicated. It was the economic and religious freedom attained to which probably ministered most to the consolidation of the conquest. But it was a mixed invasion of Arabs, Syrians, and Berbers, and the least religious were probably the Arabs. This ethnic conglomeration however, in a land so regionally divided as Spain, would have prevented effective settlement but for the other considerations indicated. As it was there were tendencies to disruption from the first, and it was perhaps only the arrival of a masterful man in the person of a scion of the dethroned Ommayyad Dynasty (Abdurrhaman) which saved the situation at a most critical time. It was an unstable equilibrium however which had been established, but the friction of the various elements in the periods of peace which doubtless occurred had a great deal to do with the brilliancy attained to. But, though the Saracens even scouted beyond the Pyrenees and were dominant for centuries in the peninsula, the Christians in the north, in the shelter of the Asturias, formed themselves into a loose federation under leaders whose names and feats, if legendary to a large extent, formed the nucleus of the resistance that was to gather into an offensive never abandoned until the Moors sailed back reluctantly to Africa.<sup>1</sup>

*Britain.*—In the eighth century tribalism is rampant in Scotland, Ireland, and England. It is still a case of the flocking and fighting of kites and crows. Imperialism of the narrowest kind is the key to the whole situation, with “kingdoms” rising and falling according to the progress of warriors, whose states might collapse after their death, although geography might have a certain say in the endless imbroglio. But Anglo-Saxon “constitutionalism” does not seem to exist even in germ. Before the end of the

<sup>1</sup> It is rather curious that the Moors never tried to root out the Asturian Christians, as they might have done, by a systematic attack with the forces wasted in France and in other directions. They seem to have treated the recalcitrants as a negligible quantity, since they did not close the corridor to the Pyrenees. Of course, if rooting out had actually been achieved, there might yet have been a Christian resurgence, such as in Greece in the nineteenth century. Thus, while Islamic toleration might secure suzerainty for a time, only absolute conformity would have prevented national revival upon religious lines. But such an attempt at conformity would probably have prevented the suzerainty originally sought after.

century, however, the Dane had given evidence that he could do to the Anglo-Saxon what the Saxon had done earlier to the Roman Britons and Celts.

## THE NINTH CENTURY

(A.D. 800 TO 900)

*Japan.*—Despite advance of science in this century the Japanese people are believed still to be in a condition of practical serfdom, while the Fujiwara family, though all unconsciously, are attempting to do what the Carolingians had achieved in France.

*China.*—There is feebleness in governmental circles in this century in the Chinese Empire, with a considerable amount of rebellion. China, too, has perhaps not got rid of the eunuch influence which was its “Mayor of the Palace” problem. Iconoclasm of its kind too affects China, as it was disturbing Byzantium. The emperor Wu-tsung (841–847) abolished temples, shut up monasteries and nunneries, and sent the inmates back to their families, and Christians, Buddhists, and Magians were forcibly repatriated. Buddhism, however, revived under another emperor about 847. He is said to have discovered a bone of Buddha and brought it home to the capital in great state. This discovery, however, could not keep royalty free from the usual dynastic blight, and in the end of the ninth century the T’ang Dynasty, which stands for the golden age of Chinese Literature, was on its last legs.

*India.*—The Mohammedans, having been expelled from north-west India about A.D. 750, we read that the land had rest for a century and a half. But whether there was real quiescence it is difficult to say. In any event there is practically no history. Whether that spelt happiness to the peoples so hopelessly obscured may reasonably be doubted.

*The Saracens.*—Although it was Persia which originated and sustained the Abbasid Dynasty, on the eastern borders of Iran rebellious dynasties rose and fell through influences difficult now to trace, but regarding which the advancing Turk may be “the hidden hand.” It was on

his way to quell a "rebellion" in Khorasan that Haroun-ar-Rashid died. His sons quarrelled over the succession, and civil war resulted. There was also rebelliousness in Syria and in Egypt, which became "quasi-independent"—also under the masterful Turk brought in as a mercenary but intent on suzerainty on his own account in the immemorial fashion. Despite the disorders, the first half of this century is considered to be the "Augustan age of Arabic literature." And the student should consider what a great influence Saracenic activity in all branches of art may have had in the Christian countries of the Mediterranean despite the incessant hubbubs. While there is not much to go by, southern Europe was probably secreting much knowledge, despite the political anarchy which was to make Italy in especial effervescent centuries before the official date of the Renaissance. There was much fighting still between the Saracens and the Byzantines, if not quite on the old scale, and with, of course, very varied results. On the whole, however, the Saracenic movement was still expansive in the territorial sense. Crete is taken in this century, and Sicily is invaded. And, while Bagdad lost its supremacy as capital to Samarra for a few years, it soon regained it.

*Byzantium.*—Before the middle of this century "the image-worship controversy was finally settled against the iconoclasts as might have been expected by all those who know the power of women in a community, and the advantage which sheer nagging can have over intelligence."<sup>1</sup> This conclusion was reached in the reign of the emperor Michael, known as "the Drunkard." He is declared to have been an utter buffoon. Throughout the century there is intermittent war, not only with the Saracens but with the Bulgarians also, the latter not yet quite subdued, like the dyer's hand, to the stuff it wrought in. There is also the usual dynastic instability, with a good deal of variation in the ability of the rulers. Leo VI, called the "Philosopher," who ruled in the last part of the century, is said hardly to deserve his exalted title. In 900 Constantinople is still the leading commercial and

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<sup>1</sup> The writer can no longer trace the authorship of this sentence which he finds among his notes. He reproduces it here to indicate a decisive verdict not infrequent among scholars.

industrial centre, showing that northern Europe was progressing despite racial and political instability.

*Italy.*—We are keeping up this title in its regional sense. Charlemagne had destroyed the Lombard kingdom in A.D. 774, and annexed it to his empire. Politically the results were to be deplorable in foisting an unnatural *liaison* between countries separated not only by the highest hills in Europe, but also by different ethnic, economic, linguistic, and cultural differences. The Lombard stock itself does not seem to have kept up its racial identity (a result that was to be expected), nor joined up in aid of the later Germanic processions from the Alps to Rome. Probably, indeed, more native-born Italians, whose politics happened to be anti-papal, fell into the imperial ranks than pure-blooded Lombards, who may, however, have assisted their Germanic kin. The stock really seems to have foundered completely in the native sea of energy, to which it may have added a progressive strain. Perhaps even the Frankish garrisons did the same. Probably, too, the repeated foreign interventions saved Italy from some evil features of the feudal system, which required stability of a certain kind for its concentric shells of authority and exaction nicely to poise themselves upon the people. This relative freedom may have been a root cause in instituting the city “republics” that were soon to appear. It is seldom or never noticed that these apparitions just referred to implied a growing market in northern Europe despite all its turmoils. For the Italian city states stood largely for a *middleman* development. And in this century Venice, founded in the time of Attila, was now “mewing its mighty youth.”

*France.*—At the beginning of the ninth century Charlemagne, whose empire it will be remembered extended far beyond the natural frontiers of France, is still the great figure of the western world and courted by potentates from enormous distances. He and Haroun-ar-Rashid, despite the gulf between their religions, had intimate enough diplomatic relations with each other, the *rapprochement*, of course, being due to the existence of Byzantium, which was regarded as the common enemy. Charlemagne died in A.D. 814, and his empire broke up, not only because of its artificiality, but also on account

of the jealousies of Charlemagne's progeny. Things tended to sort themselves out mainly in terms of the different geographical controls, and, by 843, an arrangement was come to embodied in the famous "Treaty of Verdun" which could not possibly have secured stability even if there had been no external distractions. But, on the top of the dynastic instability, came an intervention for which the political fury of Charlemagne is largely to blame. The peoples of north Germany, pushed by Charlemagne, seem to have in turn affected the "Scandinavians." The reader should note that the name "Norseman" is apt to be misleading if it gives the impression that the Vikings came mainly from Norway. That country is glaciated to a large extent and almost wholly mountainous, and never can have been an *officina gentium* on any considerable scale. Sweden and Denmark are much more productive, and it is probably mainly from these countries and the south Baltic provinces that the bulk of the "Norsemen" emerged. Though there never can be any evidence on the point there is practically no difference on that subject nowadays. There is another aspect of the case not quite so well appreciated. Just as the Teutons who overran the western empire had been advancing in scientific knowledge, if mainly on the military side, so this knowledge had been spreading northwards, as part perhaps of a world-embracing movement which could not be stopped despite the frightful political upheavals to which it gave rise in the very nature of the case. It is also a principle of interpretation here held constantly in view that progress, being so much by way of the cross-fertilisation of cultures, improvement may more readily accrue to the new-comers in any given case than to the older stock conferring the culture, whose methods may be very stereotyped in their hands. It thus seems to be true that the Norsemen improved not only upon the bows and arrows, lances, battle-axes, swords, &c., but also in the art of shipbuilding, just as did the Saracens coming with fresh minds to old problems. While it is difficult to understand how their improved metallurgy was attained to, it is easy to understand the influences shaping the naval science of the Norsemen. The relatively sheltered Baltic was a first-rate area for

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the apprenticeship of a maritime nation, while the stormier North Sea forcibly taught them *oceanic* science in the naval line and induced a courage of the extremest kind. Hence, against the still prevalent idea of peoples of an ineradicable "racial" bias with a peculiar "Berserker rage" which failed to show itself for ages and died out completely after manifestations lasting only about a couple of centuries, we can bring the "Viking Age" into the generalisation here constantly indicated. The Viking peoples probably lived the ordinary life of tribal bickerings until the slow accumulation of science in their hands secured to them an essentially transitory militant advantage motivated by the universal desire of plunder. Hence the Viking peoples, though few in numbers like the Arabs, swarmed forth from their fjelds and fjords just as did the Mohammedans from their deserts, with plunder their great bond of union, but, alas, with no real constructiveness behind their rage as with the sons of the south. For the Vikings proved themselves in advance "the Mongols of the sea," plundering and destroying with ungovernable fury, and often leaving "not a wrack behind." Saga literature reeks with a violence peculiarly its own. And yet the old Berserker peoples when their opportunity passed (as it had to do in a world drifting inevitably towards larger scientific, economic, and political issues) settled down as the most orderly communities in Europe, showing that the ancient imperialism was but the manifestation of a universal lust with only a tang of the stormier seas in it to distinguish it from the general paroxysms. Thus the Norsemen were but ordinary mortals dreeing that general weird which must always have its particular characteristics. While the earliest raids of the Norsemen were in western Scotland and in Ireland, they later began swarming up the English and French rivers, latterly seeking to colonise as well as plunder. Let the reader carefully note that the invaders in every case must have been few in numbers compared with the indigenous populations, and that they were strong in the political incoherence of the countries invaded. The heroic bands who scouted far into the Mediterranean could do nothing against the scientific Saracens. But clannish Scotland, tribal Ireland, still heptarchic England,

and imperially exhausted France suffered dreadfully from the sea-rovers, whose fury put back the hands of the political clock for generations. Such are the general clues here inculcated, although the occasion is the special note on France.<sup>1</sup> Only twenty-seven years after Charlemagne's death Norsemen were plundering Rouen and advancing on Paris, which they sacked in 845. Forty years afterwards they besieged it, and had to be bought off when "Charles the Fat" had given a certain unity to the Frankish dominions which fell quite apart from the Italic and Germanic. This recurrent centralisation in France might have proved permanent had not Rolf the Ganger, otherwise Rollo, brought his northern hammer into the Seine valley and kept smashing about at every unifying tendency on the old lines. The result was to be a reassertion of Feudalism in forms more august and embroidered than in any other period known to history.

*Spain.*—In the ninth century Spain continues under the political dualism of Christian and Moslem. But the dynasty begun by the semi-legendary Pelayo continues to make headway to some extent, notwithstanding difference among the Christians themselves. Of course, there was also disunity among the Saracens due to racial and political distinctions, the whole inflamed by the geographical divisiveness of the country lending special tortuousness to the Iberian imbroglio. Yet the Norsemen, so successful in their attacks elsewhere, made practically no impression in Spain, because the rivers did not lead them into the bowels of the land as in France.

*Britain.*—Reference has already been made to the exploits of the Norsemen in Ireland and in Scotland in

<sup>1</sup> It should further be noted that, since the motive of plunder had unified the Vikings after a fashion, it was inevitable that the imperialistic instinct should be sought to be turned in upon itself. Hence the attempts of Gorm the old in Denmark and Harold Fairhair in Norway in this century, which sent the recalcitrant Jarls forth to Iceland in a settlement that became so remarkably literate in its relative peacefulness when there was so much violence outside in mediæval Europe. The dissident Jarls, who did not settle elsewhere *en masse*, naturally tended to become pirates *à outrance* like the Morgan gangs later in the West Indies. It is quite probable that the Eddas were composed, not in Scandinavia, but by Norse settlers in Ireland, inspired by the relative peacefulness of their times. At any rate, the general references are to a more genial environment than the further north (J. M. Robertson's *Saxon and Celt*, p. 130).

this century. In England their influence was also remarkable. As three centuries had elapsed since the earliest Teutonic invasions, a certain measure of assimilation could not but have taken place in England, which lends itself less to political separatism than Scotland or Ireland. In point of fact the Heptarchy had been superseded, nominally if not really. But the Norsemen seriously interrupted the social and political unification. For those who stick to the racial theory of history in its most dogmatic form, and who have an aversion to Celts compared with Anglo-Saxons, one count in the indictment that still crops up against the Gaels is their "instinctive" aversion to the sea. West Highlanders and Irishmen have been often blamed for loafing on the shore when their seas were swarming with fish. The criticism never took account of the fact that there might be no economic marketing of the fish possible, while a bad land system might be the cause of the "long-shore" laziness. But, supposing that there was some point in the criticism, how do the anti-Celts get over the fact that the Anglo-Saxons who came to Britain, essentially as seamen if not as naked pirates, became such inveterate landlubbers that they too hated the sea, and even quite lost the art of ship-building? It was their deficiency in this respect which accounted for the supremacy of the Danes in this century. And Alfred the Great owes his renown to the fact that he, with great difficulty, built a navy which either prevented the Danes landing at all or cut off their retreat by their ships when they might be hard pressed on land. So that Anglo-Saxon assimilation on the one hand (if of a very grudging description in some cases) and thwarted Danish aggressiveness on the other are the features of English history in this century. Whether Alfred might have been a thorough imperialist had circumstances allowed we cannot say. As the case stands his victorious defence against relative barbarism, and his remarkable literacy, entitle him to the epithet "great" much more than Charlemagne, to say nothing of others who have no right at all to the title.



## THE TENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 900 TO 1000)

*Japan.*—In this century the area coming under cultivation increases in Japan—over two millions of acres perhaps being now subject to the hoe. (It, of course, will be remembered that the area of cultivable ground is a small percentage of the total.) The aborigines are also being seriously encroached upon. The new areas lying mainly eastward and northward were ceded to the nobility, who attracted numerous settlers by giving easier terms to farmers. As this gave the feudatories considerable fighting material kept keen by constant usage against the savages, it was quite natural that the provinces should endeavour to assert themselves against the capital. Hence the Fujiwara family were challenged by two country clans, the Taira and Minamoto, who, however, became deadly rivals. To begin with the Taira clan was the most influential probably because it had more science at its command as being in closer touch with the more civilised south-west.

*China.*—Disorder is “the order of the day” in the first half of this century, no less than five dynasties struggling for power and supremacy. In A.D. 960 a general was proclaimed emperor and forcibly riveted the elements together again. He fought against Khitan Tatars, but died in A.D. 976 before the war was concluded. In the end the Tatars were bought off rather than defeated. If it be true that, in this century, printing by movable blocks was invented in China, then the originality of the country is again shown in the most striking fashion. Wings were thus to be given to ideas which would make them pervasive to the uttermost point.

*India.*—In this century the Mohammedan invasion seriously begins. It came by way of the famous city of Ghazni in Afghanistan. And with Mahmud, who came to the throne in A.D. 997, the Ghaznevid Dynasty, so famous in Indian history, begins. But as Mahmud’s exploits belong rather to the succeeding century comment on them is for the moment postponed.

*The Saracens.*—The small dynasties formerly referred to as nibbling at Islam in the east of Iran were overwhelmed by the “Ghaznevids” towards the end of the tenth century. The centre of political gravity therefore shifted from Bagdad, and the Abbasid Caliphate became virtually superseded. Just as it was hazarded that the “decay,” so-called, in the Roman Empire may have stood for real progress in some quarters rather than for degeneration, so the passing away of the eastern Caliphate was also due in some measure to commendable enough self-assertion as well as the advent of the Seljuks from central Asia. These “Turks” had, of course, been imbibing knowledge from the civilisations they neighboured, and of whose possessions they were covetous like the European barbarians. But, just as in the case of Rome, let us be extremely careful of the conception of “decay.” The Seljuk advance stood for a progress in *material* knowledge at least, while their later collapse after the exercise of the suzerainty was on all fours with the western barbaric “degeneration,” which yet may quite well have been due to a real spiritual advance in a peaceful direction, since the luxuriousness involved attached only to the dynasties and their hangers-on, and did not affect the *peoples* in the same fashion. Let the reader therefore in the crisis which we are approaching in the Mohammedan world seek to pierce below the mere Caliphate film of things and realise that vigorous forms of both Christian and Saracen life continued to be led, commendable perhaps because of the assertiveness that may be traced in any particular case. There may be more real “decay” under unity than under disorder. Apparent anarchy may be really a groping after autonomy, which is a most commendable goal, failing complete independence. In the long Islamic corridors of activity from further Asia to the Iberian Atlantic, a certain community of thought and relative freedom of trade continued, maintaining Civilisation at a notably high standard, and stimulating southern Christian Europe in fashions that may be none the less real because only perceptible for us now under the guidance of general principles rather than positive historical data. Italy, in particular, in this century (which is considered a “Dark Age” after the Carolingian

effulgence—really so superficial in its character) quite patently benefited by the Saracenic contacts, of which we see the barbs but cannot gauge the stimuli. Let it also be remembered that the different geographical controls continued to work out their variant results in Iran, Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, North Africa, and Iberia, with religion intervening at times, as in the installation in this century of a “Fatimite” Dynasty in Egypt tracing its descent back to Mohammed’s daughter. The dynasty is believed to have had some obscure relation to the “Assassins” of later times.

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to  
1000

*Byzantium.*—The tenth century in Byzantium, while manifesting palace revolutions of a lustful kind, is also an age of great military glory. Not only are Crete, Cyprus, and Antioch recovered from the Saracens, but the Bulgarians also are chastised before their final defeat in the next century by Basil “the slayer of the Bulgarians.” And new enemies appear now on the list—the Hungarians and the still more portentous Russians. The Norsemen, whose uprising we discussed in relation to the ninth century, did not all go south by west. Some went south by east into the great plains of Russia. There nomadism had had complete elbow-room from time immemorial, and the country was regarded as a vast caravanseraï on the journey to the more fruitful west and south. It is true that nations had tried to settle on the soil but in vain. We have seen how the Goths of Hermanric were swept aside by the Huns, who were the predecessors of the Avars, Bulgars, Hungarians, and others. All the same, in a world which was increasing in numbers and in knowledge despite all the tumults, there must already have been settlements of the “Slavonic” peoples, utterly obscure as their origin and development are to us now. Not only so, but these and the other “backwoodsmen of Europe” must for long have been supplying a market for Constantinople and for the rising Italian towns, with Venice at their head. In any case, Rurik and his generals did not journey through uninhabited wastes, even if the areas were very scantily peopled. And the Varangians were not such pure destroyers as in former cases, but *constructors* rather, if of a very rudimentary sort still. Of course, they were imperialistic and made

an attempt against Constantinople which was heavily defeated. But the Varangians, though lost in the Slavonic sea, yet made Russian history *organic* and linked it up with the great eastern metropolis from which the Russians derived their culture, and which they may never cease to covet on that account.

*Italy.*—In the tenth century Italy continues to be assaulted by the Saracens, who brought perhaps on the whole more light and leading than brutal destruction. Quite the contrary with the Magyars who had invaded Hungary and swept down through the Alps, ravishing Lombardy. Yet the towns were not only learning to defend themselves, but also beginning to trade as producers as well as intermediaries between northern and western Europe and the Byzantine and Saracenic east. The reader should note that, as Venice was best protected by the sea from pirates, and lay at the head of the Adriatic commanding the easiest Alpine passes leading most directly into central Europe, then advancing in density of population and scientific knowledge with whatever distraction, there is no wonder that the lagoon city should take the lead in the commercial and “republican” movement of those ages. At first, too, her government was popular, though, for obvious enough reasons,<sup>1</sup> the oligarchy became an extremely close one. Throughout the whole peninsula, however, new and vital influences were stirring the blood of the peoples under the pretences of pope, emperor,<sup>2</sup> and fading Byzantine tradition. Slaves were being freed, peasants aggrandised and multiplying in numbers, towns fortified, and commerce unshackled in a fashion which makes this anything but a “dark” age for Italy.

*France.*—While Italy is obscurely advancing, France is rather receding in consequence of the different conditions. The Treaty of Verdun, so far from settling the Carolingian muddle, rather gave the always recalcitrant nobility its chance, especially with the Norsemen continually interrupting the old tendencies to cohesion.

<sup>1</sup> See hereafter, p. 318.

<sup>2</sup> In this century the Germans took up the thankless task of emperorship, Otto called “the Great” being the first of the distinct Teutonic line.

Rollo had settled forcibly in Normandy in this century, under an agreement to keep out his countrymen thereafter. So France, distracted also by Hungarian raiders, shed off her Carolingians and set up her Feudalism, which is often mistaken as *the* great type of which other forms are less important variations. As a matter of fact, we have seen that Feudalism may arise in any country, according to the conditions and with forms varying from age to age even in a single state. In such a decided "geographical unit" as France, however, it was impossible that the old centralising tendencies should not reassert themselves. It was also quite natural that the nucleus should form in the Paris basin for the reasons already indicated. So, before the end of this century, the Capets had asserted themselves in that quarter and started that slow process of aggrandisement which made them the chief dynasts of France which it took the high explosive of more than one first-class revolution to blow into fragments. Against the idea still frequently propounded that the Capets, like the Hohenzollerns later in Germany, succeeded only by hereditary cunning, it is here suggested that, in each case, it was geography more than special talent that led to the elevation of the lines. Paris commanded France even in ancient Roman times, and the dynasty planted there was bound to succeed, barring utter failure of the stock.<sup>1</sup>

*Spain.*—In this century the various Christian states waging the endless crusade with the Moors begin to define themselves on the pages of history. These states were determined by the lie of the mountains, the run of the rivers, and other geographical factors. Could they have but joined up amicably with each other and made an unselfish appeal to the many Christians living under Moorish rule, a generation might have sufficed for the *reconquista*. Instead of that, through the mortal jealousies nurtured by the selfishness of potentates, peoples, and provinces, and fostered by the various *milieux*, the work was to drag on for nearly six centuries more. In the era in hand the Christian differences were very pronounced, perhaps just because the very expansion of the states was raising new problems and accentuating the trouble

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<sup>1</sup> Berlin's case will be dealt with later.

of old ones. On the other hand, in the beginning of this century, Abderahman III of Cordova gave the greatest lustre of any potentate to Moorish Spain. He ranks indeed among the most enlightened and illustrious despots in history. But, by the end of the century, the Christian constriction, despite its irregularity, had begun to tell on the Saracenic south, starting on its slow retreat towards Gibraltar.

*Britain.*—In this century the native Irish, while fighting among themselves, are forming up against the Norsemen. In Scotland King Constantine is supposed to have rendered fealty to King Edward of England. This formed the basis of English claims thereafter, any colourable title to suzerainty being desirable for its own sake, although supremacy would have been striven for—title or no title. In England the Anglo-Saxon revival set up by Alfred the Great did not last, and the reign of Ethelred “the Unready” marks a great recrudescence of Danish power, the causes of which however probably lie deeper than royal supineness.

## THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1000 TO 1100)

*Japan.*—In this century the Taira and Minamoto clans were continuing to assert themselves against the Fujiwara family, still holding royalty in leash. In the capital superstition and effeminacy are said to have been rampant, with foppishness also much in evidence. Curiously enough women also were sought after (it can surely have been only in aristocratic circles) less for their domestic virtues than for their literary accomplishments, or real or fancied powers of appreciation in that line. The native style of painting seems also to have been developed at this time by Fujiwara-no-Motomitsu.

*China.*—In this era there is practically nothing to be recorded regarding China internally. The Tatars, who had been bought off in the preceding century, are again very menacing. This, of course, may imply not so much “decadence” on the part of the Chinese as mechanical

advance on the Tatars' part, backed up by a ruder mentality which was efficient for destruction but useless for Civilisation until it had acquired the propensities of the tillers, too readily viewed as degenerate because they were relatively peaceful.

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to  
1100

*India.*—This is the age of Sultan Mahmud the Ghaznevid, who has attained immortal glory among the Mohammedans for his almost ceaseless raids into India, bringing back glorious hauls of booty, including the gates of Somnath and the battered idol from which gushed precious stones. It must have been a very productive and patient India which could thus permit itself to be periodically despoiled from a great lair in Afghanistan. But does not the "glory" belong more to the robbed than to the robber, who had the same *penchant* as Charlemagne for forcible conversion? Would not real glory have consisted more in respecting other peoples' productivity and trying peacefully to better it at home than in smashing idols and battering out brains which cannot be intellectualised by being destroyed? Yet, to give the devil his due, Mahmud was a great admirer of the fine arts. He patronised Firdousi "the Persian Homer," who was singing heroic lays when Greece had been dumb for more than a millennium. But the despot quarrelled with the poet regarding the reward promised, though insufficient sycophancy on the bard's side may have contributed to the strained relations.<sup>1</sup> So Firdousi had to fly the country, and, it is said, died before the camels sent by the repentant Sultan could be unloaded of their hundred thousand pieces of gold, which, mayhap, Mahmud had stolen from the Hindus to settle his poetical bill. But, in this case, Paul was not paid though Peter was robbed.

*The Saracens.*—Strong as the Ghaznevids were for spoliation they, of course, had rivals in the art. The Seljuks referred to under this title in the last section were a branch of the "Turkish" stock that had long been drifting south-west from inner Asia. The Seljuks seem to have been fairly numerous, and, as they passed

<sup>1</sup> Mahmud patronised altogether some four hundred poets, with "a king of the bards" at their head. One of the sycophants, Roudagi, was lamentably prolific, having produced, it is said, over a million verses which the world has willingly let die.

into Persia on the way to Bagdad, they grazed very heavily against the Ghaznevids. The Caliphate in their time became more than ever a mockery which had its analogues in all states where pretences may last almost indefinitely, and sometimes serve a useful purpose in that "saving of faces" which is of so much account in diplomacy. It is noticeable that Omar Khayyām, the astronomer poet, is said to have come into most intimate touch with Nizam-ul-Mulk, a celebrated Seljukian vizier, and a master-mind in his way, who founded universities, mosques, hospitals, and the like—so civilised may some "barbarians" be. The Seljukians were Sunnites, and evidently had it in mind to rivet together the divergent Arabian and Persian cultures—a task which was, of course, hopeless. In their progress through the dominions of the Caliphate they split up into several branches, and it was their advance-guard which was called upon, in the end of this century, to lift up the gauge thrown down by the European Crusaders.

*Byzantium.*—The Crusades dwarf almost everything else in the western world in this century. It may be said in passing that there is no good ground for believing that, as the year A.D. 1000 approached, terror laid hold of the western nations. Instead of shivering with fright at the contemplated end of the world, they apparently went on with their avocations, so far as we can now judge, in quite an undisturbed state of mind. In the opinion of the present writer far too much mystery has been made regarding the origin of the Crusades. If we remember that aggressiveness is a *primum mobile* of all human society, and that the communities affected may be of large dimensions should the motives be sufficiently widespread, then the Crusades are but a manifestation of ordinary human desires in particular mass-form. So considered, there seems to be absolutely nothing *sui generis* in them. Wars of religion had started many years before this. We indeed saw how Christianity and Zoroastrianism crusaded against each other to the point of exhaustion, with Mohammedanism coming in as a successful competitor on the same lines. Charlemagne might be said not only to crusade against the Saxons, but also the anti-papal Lombards at the behest of the Pope.



And we have seen how Mahmud the Ghaznevid coloured his campaign against infidel Hindus with a pious motive. The Asturian Christians had, for over three centuries, been crusading against the Saracens before Palestine became an objective. In Italy itself attempts were constantly being made to raze out the Mohammedan enclaves. And, far in advance of Peter the Hermit, Roger Guiscard (at the instigation of the Pope, with a Norman nucleus but aided by many free-lances and the tagrag and bobtail of the Mediterranean) so skilfully manipulated matters that he wrested Sicily from the Saracen after an unremitting campaign of thirty years. Since both the island and Norman acquisitions on the mainland were recognised as papal fiefs, the See was naturally anxious to increase its power in any direction. Even if Guiscard's motive was, at bottom, the common or garden one of plunder, it yet involved the idea of "redemption" from the infidel with less pretentiousness and more success than in the Crusades proper. Then, in so far as pilgrimage coloured the Crusades, that was an immemorial manifestation of the human spirit, shrines innumerable having been erected all over the world. Mecca had for long been the goal of every good Mussulman's desire, while the Shi'ites had "Holy Cities" of their own consecrated by the blood of their martyrs.<sup>1</sup> It is very probable indeed that, had the Christians got hold of any of the Saracenic holy places before this time, a jehad would have been proclaimed much quicker than the Christians manifested just because of the latter's greater incoherence. In fact, from one point of view, the wonder is, not that the Crusades broke out at the time they did, but that they did not break out much earlier. In that connection we have to keep in mind that Western Christendom was long content to leave the crusading to Byzantium, with none too great sorrow expressed if, at times, the infidels quite got the better of the eastern "schismatics." So put, the question really comes to be—how did an *entente cordiale* ultimately develop in Christendom? In the first place the

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<sup>1</sup> So strong is the impression made by the Arabian capital in this connection that "Mecca" has become a generalised term for the end of pilgrimages of any sort.

Byzantines, after the previous century of triumph, had got badly hammered by the Seljuks, and an emperor was actually made prisoner at Manzikert. Then there was bloody strife between the Seljuks and the Fatimites for the possession of Palestine, and, with infidel blood up, the Christian pilgrims filtering into Jerusalem got roughly enough handled in the indiscriminate broils. But it is to be feared that the Greek emperor was more concerned with the loss of his worldly possessions than with the safety of the individual Christians (many of them schismatics from his point of view), who had been running risks of pilgrimage ever since the Holy Sepulchre passed to the Saracens.<sup>1</sup> All the same Europe was advancing as regards its religious and political consciousness, and a "comity of nations" was establishing itself, in conception at least, even if the motive force were hatred of a rival creed and of irritating trade restrictions. For, without a doubt, the trade motive mixed up with the religious in extremely baffling fashion. The Italian republics in particular, with Venice at their head, were anxious to break through the Saracenic screen in the east, and not averse to joining up with Byzantium for the nonce, hoping to snatch for themselves as much advantage as possible in the later division of the spoils. In any event, as a Crusade would stimulate the trade of the republics, little wonder they joined up in the cry of Peter the Hermit, who is being given up as the "efficient cause" of the Crusades, from which indeed he scuttled off in the first hard tussles in Asia Minor. Add to these considerations the fact that the *wanderlust* was still as strong among some westerners as among the Asiatic nomads whose drifting towards "Roum" and militant encampments there actually provoked a western reprisal, and again it should be asked if the *riposte* were not belated rather than unique. In commenting thus the writer does not in the least wish to belittle any spirituality attaching to the

<sup>1</sup> In a letter the Grecian emperor Alexius Comnenus, after narrating the woes of the Christians, is made to say that, if such indignities do not appeal to the westerners, then "let them think of the beauty of the Greek women." While it is probable enough the Greek potentate could lay such a bait to Crusaders whose faith and morality were sometimes in inverse ratio to each other, the letter in question is thought to be a forgery.

movements in question. But, while he recognises to the full the widening of horizons implied in the movement, his contention is that there was not only no singularity in the European manifestations, but as much evil as good. The evil was not in the least redeemed by the displays of "Chivalry" which the Crusades neither originated nor bettered. For knights were bold and excessively polite and ceremonious inside their caste, if contemptuous of the crowd in corresponding degree, long before lances were set in rest in the Middle Ages for the sake of beauties who, as likely as not, were the wives of other knights, or, if really oppressed, were so by other aristocrats included within the pale, who, to-day, would be classed as felons and hanged without benefit of clergy. And there is no proof that the good knights were in a majority, while the specific "Orders" which they formed became bywords for viciousness and were disbanded accordingly, even if kingly predatoriness were also a motive in the abolitions. The Crusades in short, while reflecting a certain synthetical power in Europe, were in no wise distinct from earlier movements of expansion in history, and were practically on all fours with contemporary campaigns by Almoravides and others in Spain seeking to recover the ground being lost to the Spanish Crusaders. And wilful fraud dogged the Christian demonstrations at every turn, ecclesiastics preying on the credulity of the laity, and army contractors upon both, while prostitution<sup>1</sup> wedged itself into the flank of every Crusade as if the campaign were but an ordinary one of the most secular sort. Some good the Crusades must necessarily have done by the contact and clashing of cultures involved, but the same ends could have been attained ever so much more efficaciously by peaceful contacts, while the energy utterly wasted in eastern deserts, had it been applied at home, would have redeemed Europe both as regards its ignorance and needless infertility long before the Crusades had to be abandoned as failures "through jealousies that were mountainous and incapacity that was monumental."

However all that may be, under the adjurations of the

<sup>1</sup> English women seem to have been particularly affected, tumbling into European brothels on their way east. Female Anglo-Saxons were then conspicuous inhabitants of *maisons tolérées*.

Greek emperor, the incantations of Peter the Hermit, and the guidance of Walter the Pennyless, a vast rabble started for Palestine, rolled along like a tide of mud wasting and being wasted until it practically stopped on the shores of Europe, which it simply desecrated. Immediately thereafter, however, Godfrey of Bouillon went forward with his warriors, and carved a path through the disjointed Saracenic ranks, and, in A.D. 1099, captured Jerusalem after a slaughter as frightful as anything in history. In fact the old chronicles make one feel that there was never such a blood-bath as at the capture of the Sepulchre of the Prince of Peace. And the tomb was destined to be the symbol of irreducible antagonisms lasting to our own time, since the Crimean war, according to Kinglake, originated in a brawl between Greek and Latin priests with diverse claims as to the custody of the tomb of which the Turk remained the overlord.

*Germany.*—Since, in this century, the Teutonic peoples had attained to a certain political status, however indefinite, which was destined to persist, it may be well now to bring this additional actor on to the stage. It will be remembered that the Holy Roman Empire started with a man of Germanic stock, but with his more civilised resources in France, which were probably but little diluted with Teutonic blood. Despite the break-up of the Carolingian Empire the “Holy Roman addendum” persisted with a frightful tenacity, showing what a hold even spectralities may have on human affairs. The reason, of course, roots in the aggressiveness of human kind and the disinclination to abjure any title that once gave colour, if not a positive authority, to ancient forms of power. Even to-day English Bibles in their prefaces continue to speak of the monarch as the King of Britain, *France*, and Ireland. The fact that the German races were cantoned round the Alps in greater numbers, and with command of more passes with easier gradients than the French, was possibly one of the main reasons why Holy Roman suzerainty settled in the more purely Teutonic lands, if the equilibrium was the most frightfully unstable that is known to political history. The Empire, being called into existence for motives not wholly disinterested, was bound to prove a Frankenstein to the Papacy, which

sought to deny it the gift of the real life it never ceased to claim. The demand became all the more clamant the more masterful was the transalpine potentate preferring it. In the eleventh century fate brought out a confrontation of terrible intensity. Perhaps the greatest of all the popes was the Tuscan monk Hildebrand, who is known as Pope Gregory VII. He it was who enforced celibacy of the clergy, and instituted far-reaching Papal reforms. Gregory was powerful in Italy because of the backing he obtained from the famous Countess Matilda and the Guiscards. But an ecclesiastic who claimed universal dominion over both kings and peoples, and considered monarchy as but the moon compared with the sun of ecclesiasticism in the heavens, was bound to arouse the fiercest antagonisms in every quarter. Hence the masterful German emperor, Henry IV, got backing even in Rome itself. The struggle was one about "investitures," but cut deeper like the Civil War in the United States, fought nominally over State rights but with slavery as an equally profound cause. At first Gregory and Matilda were successful in the contest that ensued, and Henry had to go to Canossa and wait barefooted like a beggar, shivering in the snow until the Pope and the Countess deigned to receive him. Thereafter depositions and counter-depositions hurtled through the air, and Gregory, through a turn of fortune, died in exile. But the Papacy turned Henry's sons against him, and he too came utterly to grief, dying, it is said, in complete poverty at Liége about 1106 "unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown." Thus, on both sides, pretentiousness was balanced by abasement.

*Italy.*—A good deal of the history of Italy in this century has been anticipated in preceding sections. In addition to the flashing of Norman swords amidst Saracenic glammers and the battle-cries of emperor and people, the reader should take note of the obscure growth in grace of the northern parts of the peninsula in the development of trade and commerce, of urban intelligence, of civic freedoms, and, not least, of mercantile astuteness which saw in the Crusades a proposition that "paid" beyond all precedent.

*France.*—In France in this century the house of Capet

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was struggling on with mediocre brains, enlarging its domains by leaning heavily on the Church and "the people" against the nobles. The house was always happy in the possession of sons to carry on the succession to lands, still not great in area, but really forming geographical master-keys in the wonderfully complicated feudal system. It is probable that the First Crusade, in draining away Frankish nobles who were to be specially prominent as Crusaders, helped royalty in its war with the feudatories.

*Spain.*—In the eleventh century the Christians are still hammering away at the Moors with the strangest vicissitudes. After making considerable progress the Christians, through dynastic divisions (still always reflecting the geographical differentia), not only failed to make headway, but actually lost ground. The Moors, however, were even more distracted by divisions, and it was only the Almoravides, called from Africa, who were able to reconstitute Saracenic supremacy if upon a perilous foundation. In this infidel resurgence there perished the Cid, who seems to have died of chagrin at the defeat of his lieutenant. More than all the warriors who ever lived, Rodrigo Diaz has been eulogised beyond all possible desert; nobody seems to know why. He was a soldier of fortune who fought on the side of the Moors as well as against them. Yet this veritable treason has perhaps rather intensified than diminished his fame, the chemical composition of which is beyond all analysis. Of greater consequence, probably, than his largely mythical prowess is the fact that Spain, like Italy, was developing upon freer commercial and municipal lines than had obtained in Visigothic times. It was this great, if diffused, force which perhaps lent most weight to the never abandoned crusade against the Moslems. Spain too, having sufficient on hand at home, was absolved from all participation in the greater Palestinian Crusades. The country thus got all the benefits which the Saracens could so well confer without wasting its energy in distant deserts. Spain thus, perhaps, secreted a reserve strength, which explains the predominant part she was to play when the discovery of America made all the world a stage for nations as well as individuals.

*Britain.*—In Scotland in this century Macbeth looms up as great a figure almost as the Cid, but sinister rather than heroic. The genius of Shakespeare has done for the Scot what popular appreciation in Spain did for “El Campeador.” Notwithstanding much myth in Scotland’s record, it is quite possible that the friction and fusing of Saxon and Celt stood for much progress in a world really developing despite the “darkness” on the labels still attached to it. In Ireland there was perhaps less progress through lack of the necessary stimuli.

In England in the beginning of the eleventh century the Danes are all-powerful under Canute. But, of course, it was only a false homogeneity which was secured. But Anglo-Saxonism was to have an inhibition imposed upon it from a new quarter which it could not throw off in such easy fashion, since it implied a really higher culture which moulded institutions to their very foundations. This was the Norman Conquest. Its incidents are too well known to require any recital now. Suffice it to say that continental influence had gone ahead of Norman conquest, and that, once more, we are in doubt as to the number of invaders and the ethnic modifications, if any, which resulted. Again, too, let the reader beware of such facile assertions as that William “imposed” the feudal system brought over from the continent. In point of fact, the essentials of feudalism were in England before William’s arrival, and the Bastard took care that the institutions he did set up were markedly different from those prevailing in France. Which, therefore, is the true “Feudalism”? Nobody can say. Since the new kings of England remained Dukes of Normandy and set themselves to be a thorn in the side of their French liege lord, it deserves to be noted here that a chief reason for France being so long in centralising herself under Capet influences was the English strangle-hold. This is a consideration to set off against the draining away of native French recalcitrance in the Crusades, previously referred to.

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## THE TWELFTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1100 TO 1200)

*Japan.*—It is curious that, while Feudalism is developing under the Normans in England, circumstances should also be fostering its growth in Japan, although some scholars still hold that the system was a strictly European manifestation and “a cross between barbarian custom and Roman law.” Once more it is suggested that this is a narrow view completely refuted by the facts. In any case, a system of things developed in Japan for which there is no term but “Feudalism.” The Taira clan before referred to asserted itself against the Minamoto, but its supremacy only lasted for a generation. Civil wars ensued in which the Minamoto clan prevailed, in naval battle, it would seem, as well as on land. The clan produced men of great ability. Since relative rudeness of mind is an advantage in warfare if the mechanical means do not lack, we thus find that these far-away insular struggles apparently conform to the principles here held in view throughout. Since the Minamoto’s strength lay in the country districts, it is also not difficult to understand why baronial influences surged up as a counterpoise to those of the Court still enjoying a traditional authority, though of the most emaciated type, just as in Merovingian France. But, in the world of politics, essential shams may have even more force than realities of a beneficent kind.

*China.*—In China in this era the Tatars have once more so far pierced the civilised defence as to cause another great political split of the states into two portions—the Kin or “Golden” Dynasty ruling the north, and the Sung Dynasty in the south, the lines of fracture running in quite different directions compared with those in Europe.

*India.*—The Ghaznevid Dynasty, which we saw spoliating the native Indian cultures whose history we can hardly discern, itself fell a prey in this century to another Afghan stock—the Ghors. Mohammed Ghorī seems to be a conqueror little less illustrious than Mahmud. But, though he conquered the entire northern plain and



pushed the Rajputs into their deserts, he himself never seems to have settled in Hindustan.

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*The Saracens.*—Crusading might be said to be the character of the whole Mohammedan world in this century. But, while Mohammed Ghorî was penetrating Hindustan in a virtual crusade of conversion and not of redemption, Islam was fighting for its life in Syria and in Spain. The First Crusade had resulted in the institution of several kingdoms which, Christian though they were, retained no end of jealousy of each other, while Byzantium frowned rather than smiled. The reader should note that these little principalities were more prosperous in the north than in the more desert Judean lands, which had, however, all the prestige attaching to the name of Jerusalem. But all alike tended to wilt under the fierce Syrian sun and the no less pitiless Islamic assaults. Without constant alimentation from Europe they could not have lasted as long as they actually did, although much of the migration was no better than that landed at Botany Bay in the early times of Australian settlement. Crusading therefore never really ceased, and although the bigger events are numbered there is no agreement as to what the total should be. But, in A.D. 1144, Edessa was recaptured by the Saracens, and this gave rise to what is known as the Second Crusade. It was preached by a far greater personality perhaps than Peter the Hermit. This was the famous St. Bernard, who, however, did not march forth in person but remained in Europe thundering forth his adjurations until the stock of crosses actually gave out. The expedition was a lamentable failure, and St. Bernard could only ascribe it to "the sins of the Crusaders," which enforces the point already suggested that "redemption" should have begun at home. Then, in 1187, Saladin recaptured Jerusalem. This led to the Third Crusade, so called, headed by Philip, king of France, Richard, king of England, and the emperor Barbarossa. This is the Crusade best known to the man in the street by reason of the participation in it of Richard Cœur de Lion and Saladin, round whose figures play the finest lights of chivalry. But the miserable jealousies of the Christian monarchs made the Crusade another lamentable failure against the now consolidated ranks of the infidels, who had perhaps more unselfish

zeal on their side on this occasion than the Europeans had.

*Byzantium.*—If the Papacy lived to rue the creation of the Holy Roman Empire which it did so much to evoke, no less did Byzantium repent of the western Crusaders to whom it had beckoned so desperately at the beginning of the movement. These gentry considered they had a right-of-way through the land routes of Byzantium, and were rather disposed to make free with the resources of the country as they passed along, as well as prefer exorbitant claims in connection with the spoils gained from the common enemy. In point of fact, what between incapable rulers, religious bigotries, ecclesiastical jealousies, unwelcome crusading guests, commercial rivalry of the Italian republics, Bulgarian recalcitrance, and unceasing Saracenic hostility Byzantium in this century may be considered as really entering upon its decrepitude. The term, however, applies only in a relative sense, since the elements comprising the general system were no more “unhealthy” than they had always been. But they could no longer either expand in a world synthesising itself on lines of greater policy than were formerly possible, or even maintain complete stability within the ancient bounds, restricted as they were becoming by new western aggressiveness as well as by the old eastern pressures under new forms. But “decay” in the sense indicated was certainly at work in Byzantium, and that is perhaps the chief determining feature in the history of this century.

*Germany.*—It has already been noticed<sup>1</sup> that Germany, while having the advantage of “interior lines” as regards the rest of Europe, was yet very highly “articulated,” and was pulled in half a dozen different directions as regards her political ambitions. In addition to that there was the special distraction set up by the tradition of the Holy Roman Empire, which remained a constant lure and just as endless a frustration. Little wonder then that, despite the virtual unity of speech set up by Luther’s works, she remained almost as politically disrupted as the clans of the Caucasus until the nineteenth century. The wonder is rather that, with so many distractions, she attained at times even the semblance of unity. It required, of course,

<sup>1</sup> See before, p. 144.

extraordinary luck or specially able men, or both combined, to attain the symmetry that so much attracts the historical gaze, too often content with superficial looks merely. In the twelfth century one such man appeared in Germany. This was Frederick Barbarossa, who achieved a certain order in Germany, granting liberties to Teutonic towns which, at the same time, he tried to filch from Italian cities. But he had to fight desperately for his position, not only in Germany but also in Italy, swearing as he held the stirrup of the Pope in symbol of grudging obedience, and worsted at length by the struggle of the Italian republics against him. Having, towards the end of his career, patched up things after a fashion in Germany and become reconciled to the Pope, also after a fashion, he started on a crusade to Palestine in connection with Philip of France and Richard of England, with whom schemes had been worked up, once more after a fashion. Going through Cilicia he got drowned so obscurely as to give rise to one of those legends that he was not dead but hiding until some more auspicious day—a day which never yet has dawned to justify a single one of these pathetic popular delusions.

*Italy.*—The actions and reactions of Italy and Germany upon each other were most baffling and intricate in this century, as just indicated. And internal politics in Italy were perhaps even more tangled than in Germany, and with an even sharper edge to their activities. There was certainly greater prosperity in Italy than in Germany, due probably to greater initiative, but also to some extent to the fact that the peninsula was in closer touch with the greater productive centres still. This increase of production increased the natural disputatiousness of the Italian communes, who fought with each other in such dire confusion that an attempt to follow the events and understand them is apt to induce a sense of mental vertigo. In a word, the only rationalisation that can be applied is that the movements were, in their malignant aspects, utterly irrational. It should, however, be noted that the Papacy in the end of the century, in consequence of the advent of another strong man in the person of Innocent III, attained perhaps the climax of its power.

*France.*—In this century the Capets continue to hold

their own even when not specially gifted in any direction. But towards the end of the era Philip Augustus showed how much unscrupulous cunning could supplement the natural influences favouring his house. Though he went out to Palestine himself in alliance with Cœur de Lion, he not only quarrelled with that potentate but also hurried home to take advantages in Normandy when Richard was absent, and tried to have Richard permanently incarcerated in Bohemia. Philip seized Normandy through the weakness of King John, and went far to subdue the feudal nobility, against whom he pitted not only the Church but also the communes which he favoured, not for their own sakes, but as make-weights in the process of centralisation. Naturally, also, he favoured men of low degree for the reasons already advanced.<sup>1</sup> So France grew in symmetry by cunning as well as by geography.

*Spain.*—In the twelfth century Spain was again making headway against the Moors, not only with her own soldiers, but also with the aid of other European Crusaders passing along to the greater fights in Palestine. It was indeed with such help that Portugal arose as a separate nation in the flank of Spain. But the struggle remained a complicated business. Just as Philip Augustus favoured communes, so did some Spanish potentates intent on curbing the local nobility who were coveting the land of the Moors, and fancying themselves as absolute lords in their place. In this century the varying geographical controls are shaping out Castille and Aragon as the greater polities destined to achieve the work of “redemption” and shoot far beyond it, since the latter was intent upon the possession of the Balearic Isles, and with an eye even upon Italy in those days. So paradoxically do the principles of “liberty” work!

*Britain.*—In the twelfth century the Norman Conquest was not only consolidating itself in England, but was also expanding in Wales, in Ireland, and in Scotland. And this took place despite the frightful anarchy created by the civil wars between Stephen and Matilda, at the end of which the Plantagenet Dynasty came into power. The century is also memorable for the dispute that occurred between the first Plantagenet and Thomas à Becket—another phase

<sup>1</sup> See before, p. 156.

of the eternal problem between Church and State in those times. As regards Wales, Ireland, and Scotland it may be well here summarily to rationalise their different destinies in terms of the principles held by the writer. While the conquest of both Wales and Ireland was begun in this century Scotland, although encroached upon, was never really conquered like the others. It is possible to say that the reason for this is that Scotsmen were more courageous and persistent than Welshmen and Irishmen. The writer does not believe it, thoroughbred Scotsman though he be. Once more geography is the clue rather than psychology. Wales had neither sufficient extent of country, density of population, nor good frontiers to resist definitely the Anglo-Norman invasion. She was thus literally overwhelmed when the campaign was taken determinedly in hand. The case was different with Ireland, with its considerable territory, fairly dense population, insularity, and great difficulties of *terrain*. Yet Ireland was conquered with perhaps less difficulty even than Wales. The reason does not seem to be very mysterious. The mountains and bogs of Ireland in their configuration perhaps hampered the natives more than the invaders. If the reader looks at the map he will see that the mountains of Ireland form no considerable range, but are scattered in four main clumps which form the nuclei of the various provinces. The centre of the island forms a great plain, with rivers debouching seawards in various directions. The mountains, therefore, kept the clans divided, although, in the course of time, the tribes holding control of the rivers and the great plain *might* have unified Ireland from Dublin, as France was centralised from Paris. But, before the natives were politically ripe for this, the Anglo-Normans, operating from Dublin, Waterford and Wexford, and gaining control of the river-systems, secured a strangle-hold which never could be lifted despite the fewness of their numbers and the tendency of the "pale" to retreat nearer and nearer to Dublin. Look now at the case of Scotland. In the northern kingdom there were not only acute clan divisions among the Celts, but a broad opposition between highlander and lowlander hardly perceptible in Ireland. But the geographical control made all the difference. Scotland, encompassed by stormier seas, could not be surrounded

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and penetrated by the shore lines, because these had no central plain and deep converging rivers as in Erin. The transverse barrier of the Cheviots was a real obstacle, although it could be turned both at Berwick and Carlisle. But the lines of communication required watching against the borderers all the same. Even if the Cheviots were turned there lay the mountainous enclave of Galloway on the left ; if it were " contained," that meant a reduction of the English strength ; if not guarded, it formed another danger to the lines of communication. Even if the whole southern lowlands could be invaded the inhabitants, who did not need to mind about their mud hovels, could drive the cattle, which were a much greater concern, beyond the Grampians into the north-east valleys and plains, or get swallowed up among the central or western hills, since highlander and lowlander could co-operate after a fashion in face of the common English danger. Thus Scotland could neither be surrounded, penetrated, nor commanded in virtue of any key-position such as existed in Ireland. The writer therefore suggests that the history of his native country is to be rationalised on lines like these and not by way of reference to " race " formulas whose philosophy remains wholly in the air. Thus Scotland, poor in natural wealth but rich in natural defences, not only maintained its independence, if with terrible difficulty, but also gained an equality in the ultimate co-operative union which hapless Ireland could not secure, incomparably brave, spirited, and intelligent as her populations have always been. Anticipatory as these observations may be, they are yet outlined as the most pregnant observations that can be made regarding the Britain of the twelfth century.

### THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1200 TO 1300)

*Japan.*—The Minamoto clan referred to in the last section on Japan had produced a great statesman in the person of Yoritomo. He was married to a woman of the Hojo clan, and, in some fashion which is not made clear, her family came uppermost in the government of the country in this century. But the Minamotos were quiescent for

the time only, and there seems to have been a most elaborate balancing of Shoguns, Shikkens, and Mikados to give semblance of legitimacy to the acts done by the parties strongest in their districts or legislative spheres for the time being. Some of these supposed ultimate authorities were infants in arms who might have clear enough conceptions as to toys but none as to the ordinances they were supposed to issue. All this only shows how, in the difficult art of government, much sham may be required to prop up legitimacy and prevent disorder. Even to-day these devices known as "legal fictions" can hardly be dispensed with in the most civilised courts. All these subterfuges of course are the result of law not being absolutely defined in the midst of a conflict of material interests or judicial authorities. And, so long as society is based on the institution of private property (as it may always be), legal fictions may play their parts as balance-wheels, so to say, in the social mechanism.

*China.*—We have seen how, in the fifth century, Attila and his Huns afflicted Europe more by way of driving forward the Teutonic barbarians than of actual direct pressure of the Asiatics themselves upon the civilised body politic. It had perhaps better be repeated that there is no evidence whatever that the Huns were set agoing because of drought in inner Asia. All that is required to explain such apparitions at all times is conspicuous talent able to work up a special combination in the universal desire for plunder. Many Asiatic barbarians followed in the footsteps of Attila—Avars, Bulgars, Kipchaks, Hungarians, &c.—but none of them with quite the mass-force of the Huns, although it may be that the defence was relatively stronger than in Attila's day. We cannot tell. But, in the thirteenth century, an even greater leader than Attila appeared. This was Ghenghis Kkan—whom circumstances have made the most terrible human creature that ever drew the breath of life. We know little of his origin, or how he rose to authority among the Mongols, who formed the head and front of his forces. But, how many Mongols there were, and what were the tactics and general strategy of the warriors, we cannot say. We know, however, that they headed a practically resistless combination with motives that are gross, open, palpable

as a mountain. The psychology of the shepherds simply was this: "Here are agricultural people on the edge of our deserts, with other tillers, richer still in this world's goods, on the more distant horizons. Their ways are not our ways, their thoughts not our thoughts; therefore let us plunder them as never in any previous fleecing, spare them perhaps if they will pay tribute, or destroy them if it seems good in our sight and turn their countries into sheep-runs for our men." And never perhaps since the human dawn was there such an eclipse, due perhaps to the very advance of the barbarians in material science with no mental progress on peaceable lines corresponding to it. For it seems a mistake to look upon the Mongol rising as a mere furious aggression with no "scientific backing," at least in military matters. Just as in the case of the Goths and the Vikings, who preceded the Mongols, and, more certainly, the Turks who succeeded them, barbaric rudeness of mind was supplemented not only by great mental initiative but also by the possession of better weapons, which implied increased scientific progress of its kind. Be that as it may, Ghenghis Khan and his cohorts stand for us now as furies who scourged Asia and eastern Europe with scorpions compared with the whips of their predecessors. In China, with which we are immediately concerned, the results seem to have been dreadful. In the first campaign in the north ninety cities were so utterly destroyed that Mongol horsemen boasted they could ride without stumbling over the sites where the settlements once flourished, so uniformly level were the ghastly ruins. In the south one hundred and forty towns and fortresses were destroyed, and the last emperor of the enlightened Sung Dynasty burned himself in his palace rather than fall into the hands of the shepherds, purging the earth of its impurities, as they seemed to think. It is doubtful if the destruction in the recent world war was any greater than that wrought by the Mongols in China in the thirteenth century, to say nothing of their other Asiatic depredations. And for what? To show that might was right, and that the battle lust of the strongest should rule in the world of men?<sup>1</sup> If so, the Mongols soon can-

<sup>1</sup> The one redeeming feature in the character of the Mongols was their religious toleration. John de Plano Carpini and William de Rubrukis,



celled their own dogma, and, like the Romans after the destruction of Corinth and Carthage, reversed the policy they had followed, and utterly condemned themselves in the act. For, in the last part of the thirteenth century, Kublai Khan (the grandson of the originator of the fury), so well known from the book of Marco Polo, brilliantly reconstructed the elements of Chinese life. His memory indeed is hallowed still in the regions of the ancient holocausts, although the ruler is perhaps best known to us by the suffusions welling over his reign out of the opium dreams of Coleridge :

In Xanadu did Kublai Khan  
A stately pleasure dome decree,  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man,  
Down to a sunless sea.

*India.*—Whatever the reason, the Mongols did not attack Hindustan. Had the fancy taken them they could easily have pierced the rampart of hills, but they preferred to go westwards. So India had rest as in the fourth century when the barbarians campaigned in the far East as well as the far West. Mohammed Ghorî died in 1206, killed by some tribesmen as he lay asleep on the banks of the Indus. Thereafter the city of Ghorî and the Ghanzi which it had overcome both drop into oblivion—a very transient set of circumstances having raised them to eminence. The peoples, of course, who were behind the potentates may have been but little affected by the dynastic fall. Delhi, a much more natural centre for government than the other capitals, came to the front in this century under the auspices of Kutb-ud-din, Mohammed Ghorî's viceroy, who proclaimed himself Sultan. The house which he founded is known as the "Slave dynasty." Though successful himself both as administrator and general, his successors, who reigned to the end of the century, seem to have been of no great account personally, though the lot of the people may have been none the worse on that account.

*Persia.*—The Mongol invasion swept over Iran, whether the western monks who reached the Court of the Great Khan, were astonished that all religions were allowed by the conquerors. But of course the Mongols felt that they could rule all the more securely by following a policy dictated by expediency rather than by intelligent scepticism.

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with as much destruction as in China we cannot say. From all that has been said as to Persia being a mountainous rampart in the central corridor of the old-world continents, it can be understood why she again asserted herself when political differentiations ensued on the death of Ghenghis Khan. The last remains of the Saracen pontificate disappeared, and Persia re-emerged as a national unit again deserving an historical title of its own. Though the empire of which it formed the natural centre did homage to the Great Khan in China, the homage was nominal rather than real. Just as in China, the Mongols lost their fury and began painfully to reconstruct what need never have been destroyed, or at least what equally deserved destruction, since the things reconstituted were practically a copy of the old national forms. And, just as we have seen Bulgarian paganism foundering under the solar force of Christianity, the Mongols could not resist for ever the Islamism in which they were engulfed. Mikadar Ahmad Khan, who was reigning in 1281, professed himself a convert to Islam and began persecuting Christians, who leagued up with still pagan Mongols and had the Khan assassinated.<sup>1</sup> It is rather curious to read that, not long afterwards, a Jewish doctor, Sa'd addaula, was financial minister. He was something of an economist, but favoured the Christians against the Mohammedans, and he also was assassinated. Thereafter a man of great capacity, Ghazan Mahmud, succeeded to the throne and, in the end of the century, had established considerable order in the whole administration of the State.

*Syria and Egypt.*—Now that Persia has been lopped off in connection with the Caliphate the above is perhaps the best heading for dealing with affairs in connection with the nearer Saracenic East. The tide of Mongol invasion rolling from inner Asia penetrated to the borders of Asia and, in an irregular line, reached north-westward to the Dnieper in Europe. It brought about the dissolution of the Empire of the Seljuks, who had resisted the first onset of the Crusaders from the west, but were helpless against

<sup>1</sup> Many Asiatic Christians seem to have served in the Mongol armies—disciples, probably, of the Nestorianism that had pervaded Asia. Their existence may have had something to do with the legend of Prester John, “the quasi-religious Messiah,” as someone has called him.

the absolutely secular but much more successful invaders from the east, whose only gospel was one of power and plunder. But the Mongols, because of their other gigantic commitments in Asia, were unable to pierce into Palestine, even with the help of the western crusading peoples, who were not above leaguings themselves with utter fetishists for objects which they considered so sacred. But politics, especially of an imperialistic stamp, are never very scrupulous about the means necessary to force on its militant objectives. It was Egypt which in this century held the fort for Islam. After the death of Saladin and his successors the well-known Mameluke Dynasty came to the front, with the famous Bibars as its protagonist. He was once a Mongolian slave, but was a man of great military and administrative ability if also completely unscrupulous. He and his successors swept the Crusaders back into the sea. In this century these Crusaders were of the most varied description. In the beginning of the century the Fourth Crusade, as it is commonly called, never came near Palestine. It was deflected by Venetian guile and other maleficent influences first towards Zara, and then to Constantinople, which was taken in consequence of Byzantine divisions, and what is called "The Latin Empire of Romania" instituted. The reader should carefully note that this imposition, which lasted for nearly sixty years, drained away much of the energy that could have been directed against Palestine, and so prevented the Saracenic forces there from being caught between the Christian hammer and the Mongol anvil. When the Asiatics began to turn from Shamanism to Islam, the Christian chance was gone. A "Children's Crusade" followed upon the Fourth Crusade, it being thought that previous ill-success was due to the "sins" of the Crusaders, and that seas would dry up and walls fall down, as at Jericho, if innocents set themselves upon the march to the Holy Sepulchre. But the only children who reached Jerusalem entered it as slaves. These repeated frustrations yield a certain sense of ghastliness in the terrible miscalculations at work then in human affairs, especially when we contrast the result with that of the next crusade. This was preached by the energetic Pope Innocent III, who for years hounded on the reluctant German emperor Frederick II to the task.

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Frederick was so talented that he is known as "Stupor Mundi"—the wonder of the world. But he was believed to be at heart an atheist, and an utter disbeliever in the Crusades. When, at last, he did go it was under the ban of the Church, which would then have prevented him from crusading if it could. Yet, without striking a blow, he had himself crowned king of Jerusalem, and secured for the Christian west more than all the feats of arms had won in a hundred and thirty years of conflict. What a world of paradox it was—and still is—an alleged atheist securing a world shrine without that violence in which alone the frustrate faithful believed! But Jerusalem fell into the hands of other dynasts than those who made the treaty with Frederick. This led to further crusading, in which the saintly King Louis of France, who was made a prisoner, failed as miserably as the sceptical emperor had brilliantly succeeded. As one critic of the Crusades remarked in this connection, "If faith can remove mountains they are evidently not of the military kind." Yet King Louis's campaign, whoever inspired it, was perhaps more strategically sound than its predecessors, since it regarded Egypt as the real key of the Sepulchre rather than a direct assault on Palestine. But the forces used against Egypt were insufficient for the purpose, and, by A.D. 1291, the last Christian enclaves were abandoned. The Crusades thereafter receded into the world of dreams, with much persistency, however, in the visionariness. Even Christopher Columbus, going out to the discovery of the "Zipangu" of his dream, hoped to finance another crusade for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, which was to prove unapproachable compared with the far distant continents of the west.

[NOTE.—Since we are practically taking leave of the Crusades at this point, the writer may be allowed to repeat the opinion already suggested to the effect that the Crusades stood for a tremendous waste of energy. Any good which accrued to Christendom could have been much better achieved by peace and patience rather than by the violence and the indiscriminate fury manifested. Useful borrowings there undoubtedly were, but those who put these items on the credit side of the account do not always stop to consider that their value might

have been much enhanced if they had been less surrounded by militancy at every turn. There were long truces between Christians and Saracens, and fraternisings resulted. These were the agencies of benefit—not the combats *à outrance*, which indeed tended to undo many of the increments of peace. The last thing the writer desires, however, is to ram home his personal opinions with what may appear a sledge-hammer dogmatism. He apologises if the brevity to which he is necessarily condemned in a work of the present scope should give the impression of opinionativeness at any point. But, as a little work could be written on the alleged influences of the Crusades alone, it may be seen how summarily some conclusions must be stated here. The most clear-sighted account of the Crusades in English which the writer has come across is that of Mr. Ernest Barker in his contribution to the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*.” It is there indicated how much secularism mixed up with the movement from the beginning, and how sheer worldly imperialism completely directed things before the end. Mr. Barker is also very discriminating as regards the matter of “influences,” picking out items with the greatest caution, but never quite suggesting that the violence may have been wholly unnecessary. As the reader may come across a speculation of Mr. Sharon Turner’s in his researches in this connection, it may be well to enter one word of dissent. The theory in question is that the Crusades probably prevented Europe from being completely overrun by the Turks, the bodies of the pilgrims having, in some way, formed a rampart against the Ottomans. This theory, quoted with approval by Mr. Denton in his introduction to Mr. Dutton’s work on the Crusades, seems to the writer to be wholly astray. The nearer Saracens were never friendly to the Turks, but rather hated them despite community of religion. The Christians, therefore, in warring with Seljuks and Mamelukes and tending to exhaust them, opened up paths for the Ottoman rather than closed them against his approach. Without denying spirituality to the Crusades, the diversity of communities and motives behind the movement, the distance of the objective, and the “spoils problem” perpetually involved gave a hopelessly spasmodic cast to the feelings experienced and the methods employed. A Europe which could have set its numerous

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households in order, could have composed its own religious differences, and purged itself of general political vices would not only have stood for a spirituality infinitely more profound than that exemplified in the hectic fits displayed through centuries, but would also have set up an insurmountable barrier keeping our continent inviolate against the Turks who, even at this hour, are strong, not so much because of their own vigour, as on account of Christian divisions that nothing seems able to heal.]

*Byzantium.*—In these pages it has been maintained that, despite the numerous political disasters which we have seen taking place, there was a constant if slow development in Europe, especially among the more northerly peoples, and that, while there was obscuration of culture in some directions, there was no such total eclipse as to justify the conception of “Dark Ages” in history such as is generally imagined. As has been noted, Mohammedanism was flourishing exceedingly when western Christian Europe was obscured, if not so darkly as we are prone to think. And the revival in Europe, starting as early as the ninth century, kept on developing, if somewhat erratically, while Islam entered upon *its* period of “decline,” as commonly viewed. It has also been noted that the commercial prosperity of Constantinople is only explicable on the ground that in the northern hinterlands which it commanded there was growth in population and industry, no less real perhaps because so largely an inference. In these latitudes the great European plain attains its largest dimensions in east Germany, Poland, and Russia, the last-named country having more naturally fruitful soil than any other state in Europe. As symbols of the largely conjectural development in central Europe referred to, stand the mercantile “republics” of Novgorod and Pskov which wielded such considerable influence in those ages. But, though the European plains lent themselves admirably to the political centralisation that has so often made head against the passion for autonomy, the openness of the countries to the assaults of the Asiatic nomads forever upset the operation of the synthetic forces. Hence the Russia of Rurik and his successors passed like a phantom over the political stage. But mercantilism remained to

administer to the communities always starting new militant integrations as the nomads passed by or were absorbed in the mass. The Mongols came in as a new disturbing force. In this century they annihilated the very inchoate union of the Christian forces in the battle of Liegnitz, and the work of reconstruction had to begin all over again with such light and leading as could be got from the Mediterranean, where Constantinople still flourished, if with terrible political upheavals. The Mongols, though not always taking the line of least resistance, did not search out the inimitable capital on the Golden Horn. But the Crusaders did, as we have already noticed, invited thither by a dynastic dispute, and egged on by Venice, which ever had an eye to the main chance. Thus the Palestinian Crusade was starved, and the Christians, fighting among themselves, were all the less able to put up a resistance to the Turks, who were forming into masses in the rear of the Mongols in the Asiatic highlands. The Latin possession of Constantinople was, however, destined to prove as transitory as the hold of Jerusalem. In 1261 Michael Palæologus recovered the capital, which was to remain for nearly two hundred years the seat of an empire, growing no more corrupt than other European states, but losing strength because of new European growths and political preoccupations as well as Turkish aggressiveness, which was only a menace because of European selfishness.

*Germany.*—In the Germany of the thirteenth century the great figure is that of the Emperor Frederick II, who, however, was more of an Italian (and a Saracen even) in his ways than a Teuton. We have already seen him achieving a bloodless triumph in Palestine while under excommunication by the Pope. But he had great difficulties in Sicily and Italy, as well as Germany, due in large part to his success in the east. And his dynasty foundered completely in the whirlpools of intrigue that supervened on his death. The Pope called in the Franks, as in the Lombard days, and Sicily was given over to Charles of Anjou, brother of St. Louis of France. After a period of anarchy as regards the imperial title, which may not have had any very serious reactions on the life of the peoples concerned, the house of Hapsburg got

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clothed with the spectral authority, and, with vicissitudes, it was to remain in the Austrian line, to some extent perhaps because Vienna was as much the centre of the forces involved as was Paris in the politics of France.

*Italy.*—In Italy, in this century, the forces in conflict are those of the Pope, the emperor, the republics, the country gentry, and the French—an imbroglio which signifies, it would seem, aggressiveness run utterly to seed. There is, of course, no rationalising the incidents except in terms of general irrationality, already commented on. But the point for the reader to note is that the struggles, though grave enough at times, must have been largely farcical, since the peninsula is apparently growing in population, in wealth, in general industry, and in the appreciation of science, art, and literature, as well as in the executive powers connected therewith. Dante in this century was hoarding up the love and hatred to which, in the next era, he was to give an expression as frank as it was felicitous, and to stereotype conceptions of Heaven and Hell which will probably never lose their vogue.

*France.*—The French monarchy in this century, with the backing of its geographical influences, is aggrandising itself under both saints and sinners. St. Louis is the great figure of the period—a kind of mediæval Marcus Aurelius, but with fanatical piety instead of Stoicism ingrained in his nature—full of charity in relation to human want, but utterly intolerant of all unbelief which, in his view, deserved instant death. His crusading first cost him his freedom in Egypt and, later, his life at Tunis, where he died frustrate, muttering, it is said, “Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem!” The king’s brother, Charles of Anjou, was a man of an utterly different stamp—a calculating, cold-blooded imperialist, who carved out a kingdom for himself in Sicily which was wiped out practically in a single night by the “*Sicilian Vespers*,” which set a precedent for the later massacre of St. Bartholomew. In France there was an internal Crusade against “heresy” which to-day incurs nothing but odium. That was the campaign against the Albigenses of the south of France, in which the northern nobles satisfied ancient grudges and at the same time gained large estates



against orthodox and heretic alike, since the order was given "Kill, kill! God will know his own!" So a local civilisation which could have helped France to greatness was wiped out with a fury of which Mongols need not have been ashamed, though they could never have approved of its religious intolerance.

*Spain.*—Though, in this century, Spain had quite a number of dynasties, and was far from being consolidated like France, great headway was made against Islam. The Almoravides, of whom we have spoken, rotted down quickly in Iberia, and were succeeded by another African stock, the Almohades, intended to act as a bulwark against the Christians. But they were fanatical, and made the mistake of persecuting the Jews, who, it will be remembered, had greatly helped the original Moorish invasion. The Jews seem to have been almost equally influential in securing the clearing out of the Almohades, who were defeated at what is called the "decisive" battle of Navas de Tolosa in 1212. Thereafter the Moors were confined to Granada and a line of ports round Cadiz. But many Mohammedans must have lingered on in the conquered territory, from which they were to be forcibly ejected later when Christian feeling hardened into utter intolerance. And the Spaniards, with their domestic Crusade still incomplete, were coveting the lands of other Christians as greedily as they regarded the Moorish remnant. The Balearic Isles were seized, a Spanish dynasty overcame the French as the result of the Sicilian Vespers, and Italy itself began to be schemed for, with small consideration for the fact that it was the seat of the Holy See and a dominion of the faithful. Imperialism did not consider these as absolute bars to action, but only as difficulties to be overcome by force when guile could not succeed.

*Britain.*—In Ireland, in this century, the English are holding all their gains, but it is alleged with very distinct lines of cleavage still between the races and their laws. In Scotland the problem of fealty to England still exists and became calamitous by the death of Alexander III, reckoned a great king, the false step of whose horse near a cliff on a dark night at Kinghorn robbed Scotland of all the benefits which a strong personality might have

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bestowed. Though the country as a whole proved hostile and fundamentally impregnable to England, the rough, divided configuration of the soil gave far greater play to feudal propensities than in England. Hence the constant broils, with unity often lacking in the face of an English assault. On the confusion that ensued on the death of Alexander, Sir William Wallace asserted himself in a fashion that has made him a more popular hero than Bruce, who, indeed, was then on the English side against his compatriot. But, though Wallace conquered at Stirling Bridge, he was completely defeated at Falkirk, through the English archers breaking up the "schiltrons" impervious to the southern cavalry. In the end of the century Wallace was a "fugitive from justice," at least according to one point of view.

The thirteenth century is particularly famous in England for the exaction of Magna Carta from the unwilling King John. Whole books<sup>1</sup> have been written on the Charter, so it is obvious that very few remarks may suffice here. In the writer's opinion, Magna Carta seems as much glorified beyond its deserts as the battle of Roncevalles or the doings of the wavering Cid. If constitutionalism could have no broader foundation for its conceptions than what is contained in this famous document, extorted from a weak king and overridden by stronger ones later, then it would have been a poor outlook for man in general and Englishmen in particular, whose battles for elementary rights in the later centuries cannot be proved to have been substantially lightened by a single clause in the now canonised parchment. Lawyer as the writer happens to be (and "constitutionalist" at that), he must respectfully suggest that the code of Khammurabi is not only incomparably older but also relatively more "enlightened" than a selfish baronial document making points against despots who often were more favourable to the people than the lords themselves. To think, as some people apparently do, that the world would never have had Parliaments if monopolistic barons and ecclesiastics had not cornered King John at Runnymede, is to propound a philosophy of history which may

<sup>1</sup> A specially interesting study is that of Professor W. S. Mackenzie under the title *Magna Carta*.

satisfy a certain type of British complacency, but is anything but flattering to English mentality in particular and human nature in general. So let it rest at that here ! In any event, if England developed from this point upon lines of greater constitutional freedom, she did not develop on lines of greater wisdom in her foreign politics. Edward I, "the greatest of the Plantagenets," gave stimulus and definition to the imperialism that abides in every people, conquering the Welsh, holding the Irish, "hammering" the Scots, and initiating a campaign of "redemption" in France which was to bring infinite havoc upon English and French alike.

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### THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1300 TO 1400)

*Japan.*—In the fourteenth century the Hojo supremacy breaks down, and the great families and the smaller feudal lords all take part in pulling the strings attached to the Mikado, Shogun, and Shikken puppets. One emperor, Go-Diogo, had the audacity to assert himself in the rivalry, urged on apparently by female influences. But he only partially succeeded, and there was again a fissure between the north and the south of the land. In the struggle the country gentry took their chance, and the people were reduced to a miserable condition, with the native pirates intervening heartily in the landward disputes. So Japan lapsed deeper into Feudalism, as Scotland tended to do in consequence of the existence of similar geographical controls.

*China.*—In the beginning of this century the grandson of Kublai Khan is upon the throne. As he left no heir a Mongol prince succeeded, but reigned only a short time. Then came Jen-Tsung in 1312, who conciliated the Chinese by giving them more places in the Government, and honouring the memory of Confucius. Considerable commercial relations seem at this time to have been maintained with Europe. But imperial incapacity supervened, and the Mongol Dynasty seems to have been honeycombed by the secret societies that have played so great a part in Chinese political life. So there came to the

throne the son of a labourer. He assumed the name of Hung-Wu, and was the founder of the Ming or "Bright" Dynasty. He reigned successfully, it would seem, beating the Mongols back into their homes. Though he cultivated good relations with the neighbouring states, China and Europe seem completely to have lost touch with each other in this reign.

*India.*—The "Slave Dynasty" had disappeared in India before the beginning of this century, and Ala-ud-din is on the throne. He is described as the "Third great Mohammedan Conqueror of India." One of his armies pierced to the extreme south of the peninsula, plundering every temple of its jewels and gold. To this day the memory of Ala-ud-din is cursed in the scene of his depredations. His descendants did not remain long upon the northern throne, being succeeded by the "Tughlak" Dynasty, which lasted until the end of the century. Then came Timur the Tatar, of whom more anon.

*Persia.*—The Mongolian Dynasty disappears in this century in Persia, and an unusually large number of smaller houses claim suzerainty in Iran. These in turn were swept away in another blast of fury from inner Asia, destined to be the last depression emanating from that quarter. In these pages we have written of Scythians, Huns, Bulgars, Magyars, Kipchaks, Seljuks, Mongols, Tatars, and Turks quite in the conventional way. At this point, however, it would be well to sound a particular note of warning regarding the old racial problem which we have handled with such circumspection throughout. The ethnology of Asia is probably more confused even than that of Europe as regards both language and blood relationship, just because the violence has been greater, at least in central Asia. A band of warriors consisting of men only might arrive in a certain district, kill all the males, marry all the women, and settle down. Thus mongrel races rose in plenty, with transfusion of blood and confusion of tongues as at the foot of the Tower of Babel. The blood relationships of the central Asiatics, therefore, require to be handled with the greatest care as regards the ordinary terms employed. The best plan, perhaps, is to think of them less as Huns, Mongols, Turks, &c., than as nomads with very wide-ranging powers and

assimilative capacity. This mixing of stock would tend to generate talent, even if the resultant genius manifested itself most readily in war, although great organisers in peace, like Kublai Khan, also appeared. It was indicated that, in the midst of the Seljuks, "Turks" had infiltrated, albeit the Seljuks themselves were of "Turkish" stock. The differentiation seems to have consisted more in degrees of sophistication than in different blood strains, the Turks being simply professional soldiers for the older dynasties. The Mongols, who overran Asia, included apparently many "Turks" in their ranks. But many tribes of this indefinite stock were either not affected by the Mongol conquest, or started imperialising on their own account when the greater fury had passed them by. One tribe in particular, which, in the early part of the thirteenth century, was wandering about the Euphrates, crossing and recrossing it in search of a home, suddenly came upon a battle-field, and instinctively joined up battle on the weaker side, to which it thus gave the victory. It was the Seljuks that were so assisted in their hour of great need, and the Turkish leader Ertoghrul and his three or four thousand men had gratefully bestowed upon them fiefs in central Asia Minor, which became the nursery of Ottoman power—"the most dangerous child that ever issued from the womb of Islam." But, once more, let the reader be particularly cautious about the ethnology of the case. The Ottoman Turks (so called after Osman, the conquering son of Ertoghrul) were not only very few in number to begin with, but they must have intermarried with the larger non-Turkish native stocks, with the result probably that their blood, whatever its original qualities, became utterly diluted. It is therefore suggested that Ottoman expansion was not by way of rapid multiplication of "Turks" in the physical sense, but rather of the imposition of a rigorous *system* inaugurated by Osmanli, but operated later by peoples of infinitely varied stocks, with Christians lending a hand at almost every turn. The mould invented was Turkish, but the material poured into it and run out ceaselessly in refined military form was of every possible racial ingredient, with Christian ore as a chief source of supply. For the Janissaries were Christian youths taken from

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their parents and trained for military ends. For long they were the main element of the Ottoman system, which was at first favoured by the "accident" of a succession of capable Sultans, but adapted itself by Oriental guile and mercenary Christian sharp-wittedness so extremely well that it became perhaps the most formidable military machine the world has ever seen. The Ottomans, unlike the Moors in Spain, thus drew upon native resources to an extent which may have utterly obliterated pure "Turkish" blood by the harem as well as military expedients, but which maintained the "system" as a terror to the world for centuries. When, therefore, the reader comes across allegations (as he must needs frequently do) that Ottoman expansion was due to the fact that the Turk was a "born fighter," or similar vacuity, he should bethink himself that no one knows who the "pure Turks" originally were; that the Osmanli stock was an extremely small one to begin with; that, ethnically, it probably foundered in the larger indigenous populations upon which its capable Sultans imposed a *system* whose distinguishing characteristic was its power of suction and regurgitation, so to say, whereby picked material of the most varied kind could be called into the Government machine, moulded, stamped with the authoritative die, and made to function outside with an exactness and energy such as few other systems have displayed. Later on we shall see even Greeks became the most capable manipulators of the military machine. So the Ottoman system has persisted despite absorptions and reabsorptions which make the name "Turk" a symbol merely, signifying absolutely nothing now in the racial sense—less, probably, than the equally handy but fallacious term "Anglo-Saxon" in its application not only to England, with its ancient Britons, Celts, Picts, Scots, Norsemen, Danes and Normans, but also to the United States with its olla-podrida of races. It is therefore suggested, in connection with Turkey in particular, that the reader should pursue the really tangible clue of the "system" rather than the utterly elusive one of "race." In any event, the point now to be noted is that the Osmanli Turks, under their remarkably capable military leaders (whose genius may be explained by the fact of frank,

intimate mixing of stocks), had in the fourteenth century, on the ruins of the Seljuk empire and because of the "decrepitude" of Byzantium, made most ominous headway not only in Asia Minor but also in the south of the Balkan peninsula. Gallipoli was seized in 1354. In 1361 Adrianople, the second city of the Greek empire, fell a prey to the almost resistless Ottoman machine. In the end of the century Bayezid is besieging Constantinople, and is only bought off with difficulty. But then came a diversion which, at first, threatened complete destruction of the Ottoman system—followed, however, by one of the most remarkable revivals in history, showing how marvellously contrived the machine had been for all the purposes it had in view. In 1402 Bayezid was defeated by Timur at Angora, made prisoner, and carted off into captivity from the scene of his great triumphs, whether or not he was exhibited in a golden cage, as the story goes. Although the date of this battle slightly outshoots the century in hand its significance may be noted now, since it is impossible to deal with Timur's appearance without reference to the Turkish empire which he suddenly trampled under foot, after having swept over Persia, whose case was our immediate concern. Timur (who is still best known to us as "Tamerlane") was born near Samarkand in Transoxiana. Though he is called a Tatar his tribe is said to be of Turkish stock, showing how loosely these terms are employed. He, however, had the military genius which was so abundant in central Asia, where organising talent had such excellent material with which to forge living engines of warfare whose motive force was plunder and destruction to the utmost horizons. Timur is thus only a second edition of Ghenghis Khan, perhaps improving upon the material science of his predecessor and taking slightly different routes of conquest. He did not get to China as he intended, but, after laying about him in central Asia and eastern Europe, he dipped down into India, sacked cities from whose ruins oozed out the blood of the innumerable slain, returned by Kabul as having glorified God by his destruction, and struck at Bayezid, as we have seen, and thereafter died the death of the military righteous on a fever-stricken bed on the banks of the river Sihon. Persia was wholly

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engulfed in the Tatar fury, which was far more bent upon destruction than that of the Ottomans, whose cold-bloodedness, if équally systematic, at least took more account of permanence by seeking to remould old material rather than destroy or degrade it.

*Byzantium.*—Though the “Latins” had conquered Constantinople in the thirteenth century and distributed the bulk of the empire among themselves, they could not supersede the native tongues, and had perforce to administer through Greek institutions essentially superior to their own. But, though there was Greek reassertion against Latinism, the renewed Empire could not quite rid itself of the alien growths that had taken root in some parts of the political soil, even Greek nobles being inclined to fight for their own hand instead of the state as of yore. In Europe, too, the very integration of the Christian states made them all the more jealous of the Byzantines as commercial rivals with a specially favoured site, and indifference or actual hostility could only be the lot of the country in the “new Europe” of those times. Not even mercenaries could secure the stability of the state, since no such identification took place between Janissaries and Government as was developing in the Ottoman dominions in those days. With such a consideration in hand the reader may be better able to judge why the “Catalan Grand Company” recruited by the Byzantine Emperors in this century, though it won victories, could not secure the country against the jealousies of the west and the invincible pressure of the Ottoman system in the east. So Byzantium in this century is seen being caught at last between the hammer and the anvil—a fate which nothing earthly could then have avoided.

*Germany.*—In Germany in this century we read that the “Golden Bull” issued in 1356 regulated the mode of imperial election. The reader, however, is advised that this is really one of the least important if most advertised events of the era. A new method of manipulation as regards the most elaborate of political futilities is hardly a thing to philosophise about. What is much more important to notice is that, behind the mask of empire, not only Germany but all northern Europe was developing through the advance in material science (if not growth



in spiritual grace), which the various barbarian interruptions did little to hamper—if, indeed, as before suggested, these very invasions were not themselves but symbols of scientific progress among the barbarians, with no mental culture corresponding to the tool-using power conferred upon the communities. Though the Russian and Polish plains were still being bedevilled by the nomads, nation-making was going on actively enough in other directions. Germany itself, though remaining a “geographical expression,” was being redeemed from paganism. The Teutonic Order, baulked in Palestine, was converting the Prussians and other heathen at the point of the sword *à la Charlemagne*, and meeting with more territorial and ecclesiastical success than in the Holy Land. On the other hand, the Christian Swiss, in the “Forest Cantons” forming the geographical centre of the country, began to assert themselves against the feudal pretensions of the house of Hapsburg. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark too, not only defined themselves as distinct political units, but, almost in the same hour, started a struggle for “supremacy” which was not to cease for centuries, though it was to prove as unprofitable as imperial rainbow-chasing had been in any other direction. Over and above all that, there was a vast development of towns, with complicated struggles between municipalities, accompanied by factious and transitory leagues evoked as a challenge to the country, in which the nobles resided, and from which they drew their strength. The Hanseatic League, whose *raison d’être* was the suppression of piracy as well as the encouragement of commerce, was perhaps the most famous embodiment of these mediæval forms of energy. In following the fluctuations between town and country influences the reader should consider that the former stood at a natural disadvantage, since union was always so difficult in consequence of the territory between the towns being the country of the enemy, who was strong because of the nobles being as much pre-occupied with war as the towns with commerce. Fourteenth-century Germany is therefore a “great incipience,” with the Holy Roman Empire hanging spectrally in the political sky, and Feudalism running to seed as nowhere else in the world. But there were red corpuscles

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streaming in the life of the peoples all the same, if political unity was to be denied Germany down to our day.

*Italy.*—In Italy in this century, civil wars incline to abate somewhat. That may be partly due to the advance of the country against the town—of the nobles against the citizens. The cities themselves were partly responsible for this in calling in the help of rural specialists in warfare to fight neighbouring communes, which were still being mistaken for deadly rivals instead of essential co-operators in a world where there is room for all according to their natural talents for development. A special feature of the century's history (at least to us to-day) is the predominance of Florence in art and literature, and also in the relatively "democratic" character of its institutions. Rome, which was living upon its past like an old actor, was too much out of the commercial current and too much in the general political and ecclesiastical maelstrom to energise upon "free" lines which would have made her great in the same way as Florence.<sup>1</sup> Venice was too much engrossed in commerce and too exclusive in her constitution, dominated by the close-fisted oligarchy controlling the lagoons, to allow full play to the creative spirit of things. At the same time her enormous wealth (heaped up from the practical monopoly enjoyed as middleman between the east and central Europe) enabled her to be bounteous as regards architecture and painting. On the other hand, Florence was inimitable in almost every line. Seated at the centre of the old Etruscan culture, she was better screened from the Teutonic oppression that descended periodically from the Alps, while she could draw upon all the culture that the south could give her and that streamed in return currents from the west—France, Spain, &c. The considerable agricultural wealth which developed round her induced active industry in many healthy forms; and the better balance between commerce and manufacture in an area less physically isolated than Venice gave a freer and more flexible

<sup>1</sup> In this century Rienzi, "the last of the tribunes," with the same sort of backward-glancing visionariness as animated the Gracchi, tried to re-establish republican institutions against a Papacy (then in residence at Avignon) which could only be set aside for the moment. Pathetically hopeless as the attempt was, it has set Rienzi in the same kind of sunset glow as tints the memory of the early Roman "reformers."

character to her political constitution, and conferred at once amplitude and airiness upon her artistry. The general result was that Florence in her time probably produced more geniuses to the square mile than any other area of similar size on the planet. Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch are only leading names in this century, while, in the world of politics, every kind of constitution seems to have been tried, including, apparently, attempts at "Syndicalism." These are but suggestions as to how the reader should attempt to rationalise the Italian life of this century, since the writer has not the space to enlarge further upon points which could make a book of themselves.

*France.*—The fourteenth century in France would probably have seen the Capet dynasty reigning within the full orbit of the "natural frontiers" but for the Hundred Years' War with England. That long carnival of violence had its origin in mutually exclusive feudal claims of both French and English kings, although the root cause of the struggle was the natural aggressiveness of the nations both consolidating within their natural bounds, yet anxious to assert themselves outside. Though the English proved themselves much the better fighters, as shown by the battles of Crécy and Poitiers, they were involved in an essentially hopeless task. The sense of nationality, however rudimentary, was gaining the upper hand in every quarter where the geographical conditions and political commitments did not completely handicap the vague sense of unity, as they did in Germany. The English, indeed, only succeeded to the extent they did because they artfully contrived to pit French provinces against each other. But neither that artifice, nor real "coddling" (in some cases making English rule actually better than French), availed in the long run against the centripetal tendencies within France itself. The Hundred Years' War, it is therefore suggested, was as much a waste of energy as the Crusades, with not even a semblance of religious ardour to redeem the creations of essentially "eccentric" positions which could no more "stand pat" in France than in Palestine. In short, France and England were created by nature to have different dynasties and politics, and even a common tongue would no more

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have kept them from drifting apart than in the case of Britain and Ireland to-day. *Ententes cordiales* there might always have been, but never suzerainties on either side. Such, at any rate, is the summary consideration now suggested. In the beginning of the fourteenth century wily French kings were enlarging their borders, dragooning the Low Countries, persecuting the Jews, abolishing Knight Templars, and ordaining the seat of the Papacy at Avignon—the “Babylonian Captivity,” as it is called, which lasted some seventy years during the earlier horrors of the Hundred Years’ War. It is a tribute to the power of the French polity of that time that it should have caused the Papacy to be deflected for such a length of time from Rome. And it is possible, though hardly probable, that but for the disorder set up by the Hundred Years’ War, the Papacy *might* have remained at Avignon instead of reverting to the “Eternal City.”

*Spain.*—Though, in the fourteenth century, the Moors were still hanging on to the skirts of southern Spain, in the other dominions reconquered by the Spaniards there were left many “Moriscoes,” as well as Jews. What their numbers were it is impossible to say. It seems, however, that both classes were well treated in this era, which, indeed, is called their “Golden Age.” But, before the end of the century, the absolutist view of religion was beginning to prevail on the Christian side, and Jews were massacred, not simply on account of their religion, but also because they were tax-gatherers. For both Hebrews and Saracens the future was to be a black one in Spain. So long as Aragon was still intent on expanding towards Italy and the other leading state, Castille, was still unconsolidated, there was a good deal of “freedom” in existence in Iberia itself. The “Cortes” was not the figurehead it afterwards became; the nobility were pretty much alive. So were the towns and the “Hermendados,” or brotherhoods, evoked as a sort of opposition to the nobility. It was a very unstable political equilibrium, and to this day it is being argued whether or not “Pedro the Cruel,” as he was called, was not but another instance of a man concerned for the people as against the turbulent aristocrats, and who was simply unlucky in the matter of biographers, like Tiberius and Theodora.

*Britain.*—In Scotland the fourteenth century is specially notable for the battle of Bannockburn. Scotch historians are not alone in pronouncing this to be one of the “decisive” battles of the world. If this means that, but for Bannockburn, Scotland would have been permanently subjected, like Wales and Ireland, the writer, Scotsman as he is, cannot agree. Scotland after Bannockburn was in perhaps more perilous case than even before it. It was invaded as far north as Inverness, defeated utterly on several battlefields, and its king taken prisoner to England, where he swore fealty to his jailer. An irreducible national sentiment was in existence long before Bannockburn—otherwise that battle never would have been fought—and it was the continuance of that sentiment, sustained by all the geographical influences previously outlined, which kept Scotland’s head above water, and not the single fact of a great victory, for which Bruce certainly deserves all credit, but which, after all, was but an incident rather than a fixed determinant in history.<sup>1</sup> So poor Scotland, wasting much of its energy in Ireland and France, was hard put to it for centuries between English covetousness, feudal rapacity, and a painful succession of royal minorities.

In England, in the fourteenth century, history is shaped mainly by the warrior king, Edward III, who hammered both Scotch and French sufficiently hard to have knocked all sense of nationality out of their heads had the task been within the limits of possibility. But it was not, and for the reasons already indicated. That is sufficient comment on this “knightly” potentate, who, after a heroic career of martial victory, sank into a dishonoured grave, leaving a hideous legacy of trouble to his weaker successor, doomed to succumb under the load. England was affected by the Black Death, which was perhaps aggravated by the Hundred Years’ War if not actually caused by it. One result was to raise the wages of labourers. These could not be reduced by legislation, which it was the interest of nearly all the parties to defeat.<sup>2</sup> It was

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<sup>1</sup> The writer’s friend, Mr. W. Mackay Mackenzie, M.A., has written a little work (*The Battle of Bannockburn*. MacLehose) which has revolutionised opinion as to the place where the battle was fought and as to how it was won.

<sup>2</sup> The peasantry were instinctively prompted to insist upon more than the legal amount, while the gentry, anxious to have their land tilled at

perhaps this accession of relative well-being which influenced the rising under Wat Tyler, since "the people" are never less prone to rebellion than when sunk in hopeless poverty. In any case, the movement did not succeed because of the instability of will-power, formerly commented on in relation to first principles. But the rebellion was a sign of the times in which the economic drift was tending towards betterment in the way of casting off serfdom and even servility of thought. For Lollardism, under Wyclif's inspiration, is also a remarkable sign of the times. Despite persecution the new tenets survived to inspire fresh movements later. The poet Chaucer is also a portent in the world of art, his product showing how much culture depends upon a blending of systems. For France, taught by Italy (which was in turn inspired by her old Latin lore and Saracenic emulations), was setting up a "renaissance" long before the conventional date of the *hegira*, or flight of Greek scholars from Constantinople after its capture.

## THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1400 TO 1500)

This century is perhaps the greatest "turning point" in the world's history, for these reasons:

1. Printing, which was first discovered in China, had been independently invented in Europe about the middle of the fourteenth century, and was now therefore aiding greatly in the propagation of ideas.

2. Gunpowder (which also had been invented by the Chinese, though not used as a projectile force) was coming into use for fire-arms in Europe. Though the civilised people employed the new force in ways only too detrimental to each others interests, gunpowder had at least this enormously beneficial result—it rid the world permanently of the dangers of nomadism. This great result may be made apparent in very few words.<sup>1</sup> So long as warfare

any cost, were equally moved to circumvent the legislation in outbidding each other for the help required.

<sup>1</sup> This is a point which the writer had to think out for himself without help from any quarter that he knows of except a hint from Voltaire. The author will be obliged if any reader can give any other reference.

depended upon bows and arrows, lances, swords, axes and other weapons, *the nomadic smithies and arsenals were quite equal to the task of necessary equipment.* Swords and axes could be retempered and might last a military lifetime, while lances and arrows could be plucked from the slain and made "to fight another day." In other words, the civilised peoples had no advantage whatever over the barbarians as regards *matériel* and were at a decided disadvantage in having a softer mentality than the horsemen from the steppes. But things were completely altered when gunpowder came into effective use as a propellant. The moment gunpowder is exploded its energy becomes hopelessly lost in the atmosphere, while cannon of any great size could not be forged in primitive foundries. Relative *wealth*, therefore, became a decisive factor in warfare as never before. So the nomads, poverty-stricken by nature through lack of ores or of great populations nourished by agriculture, were necessarily doomed to "decay" in the sense that never again could they overrun the tillers, to whom the new weapons gave not only material prepotency but also a sense of manhood in place of the old feeling of helplessness. Thus, whatever charges may be laid at the door of gunpowder as a means of warfare between civilised nations themselves, its intervention was yet a blessing in fixing the doom of the nomad. It took time, of course, for the new invention to tell. Indeed the semi-nomadic Turks, just because they appreciated the power of the new arm earlier than the Christians, made some of their greatest gains by means of explosives. The triple walls of Constantinople fell before the shot of cannon, forged, it is stated, by renegade Christians. On the other hand, the Russians, with the aid of fire-arms, began a campaign against the Tatars which soon resulted in the expulsion of the Golden Horde. So Europe was now free for ever from the immemorial curse, if left with all too much militancy and malignity of its own.

3. The discovery of America in this century made the world round in fact as well as in the conceptions of astronomers. Human history ceased to be hemispherical and became planetary. But, just because facts become so multifarious, it is impossible to comment upon them here on the scale hitherto employed without putting

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this book beyond the reach of those for whom it is intended. Happily the relative nearness of these facts make them so comparatively well known that abbreviation may now be resorted to without any serious disadvantage. Let it be clearly understood, therefore, that nothing but the most salient facts of the case will now be stated. But, first of all, let the considerations peculiar to America be brought into view on the lines previously attempted regarding the old-world polities.

(a) The voyage of Columbus is too well known as regards its origin, the difficulties encountered, and the nature of the things achieved to need any comment here now, though it may be again indicated that the Genoese was badly out in his calculations, found a different country from the one he sought as a means of "redeeming" the Holy Sepulchre, and died seemingly ignorant of the fact of the world he discovered being really a "new" one—a disappointed and disgraced man despite the essential grandeur of his discovery. For it proved anything but a rich land in the first years of prospecting, with painted savages galore, but no minerals or spices, or "fountain of immortality" such as had been dreamed of. There were nothing but nomads both in North America and in the South save on the later discovered plateaux of Mexico and the hillsides of Peru. The special conditions of these countries we shall now seek dynamically to explore.

(b) Hardly anyone believes that man "originated" in America and that the old world was peopled from the new, which is said to be quite as aged in the geological sense.<sup>1</sup> The natives of America have decided affinities with the eastern Asiatic races, and there seems little room to doubt that "in the dark backward and abysm of time" the extremely venturesome tool-using animal, having reached the Asiatic shores of the Pacific, perhaps in hunting for food

<sup>1</sup> When we keep in mind man's mobility through his exclusive use of tools we can better understand Voltaire's sensible remark that we should no more be surprised at finding men in America when it was discovered than at finding flies also there. It is extremely probable that the Vikings, who had voyaged to Greenland, went from there to America. But it is not in the least surprising that nothing came of the venture. The voyagers must have been few in numbers, and the natives would be hostile in the last degree. And so the Scandinavian pioneers would probably be wiped out completely, as were some of the Anglo-Saxon settlers later.



and in being hunted by stronger tribes within, struck across the sea to the continent within sight of Asia's terminal northern peninsula, although it is just possible that the first inhabitants may have been carried as involuntary emigrants on the bosom of the "black stream" of the Pacific, which, within historical times, has landed not a few Asiatics on the coast of California. The peopling and ethnology of America are not, however, questions which really concern us now. The question is—In a continent presumably colonised by hunters and inhabited from end to end by people of that breed, how did civilisation, instead of sprouting on the soil of easiest cultivation, seek out instead the areas of greater difficulty? In advance we have answered the question by citing the well-nigh irreconcilable hostility of the nomads, who preferred to cling to the ancient ways. Since the "simple build" of America, before referred to, allowed no sufficient shelter for the spirit of tillage in the northern quadrilateral, despite its almost perfect climate in the east and the superabundance of unusually fertile soil, agriculture had perforce to seek out fastnesses which would prevent chronic molestation or complete destruction. Even the glades of Florida were not a protection from the nomadic curse. And, while the alluvial flats of the Missouri gave shelter to the Mandans, who had taken to tillage for a period of time which is quite uncertain, there is no real asylum for agriculture north of the complicated fastnesses of the tableland of Mexico.

(c) In America, while there are rivers which run through desert country, there are none which overflow in the same bounteous fashion as the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates, keeping closely to the level of the plain and perpetually refertilising the flats. The Colorado river, stunted in its energy compared with the old-world streams, has cut like a razor into the rocks, and flows almost uselessly to the sea in chasms whose picturesqueness hardly compensates for their inutility. There could thus be no riverain civilisations conforming to those of the Old World. But the spirit of tillage, insuppressible in the mind of man if only harboured sectionally, sought out the other ways open to it, which were practically the methods discussed as regards Persia. Mexico, like Persia, is essentially a mountainous tableland whose ridges form systems even

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more complicated than in Iran. As in Persia also, although there are some seasonal rains, the country on the whole lies in the zone of insufficient precipitation. But the snow-capturing hills feed a few not inconsiderable rivers, some lakes, and numberless small streams, and irrigation was thus possible to allow of tillage under sheltered conditions, which were the prerequisite of civilisation in a world of nomadism.

(d) And, in point of historical fact, tillage was found in effective form only in North America, in the classical land of the three climates, hot, temperate, and cold (*tierra caliente*, *tierra templada*, and *tierra fria*). The hot climates are found on the waterless and almost uninhabitable coastlands of Mexico. Temperate conditions, however, can be easily attained to up the sides of the numerous mountains, and the promptings to tillage were thus backed up by the energy which temperateness can supply. We do not know how long the Mexican civilisation had been in existence before it was pounced on by the Spaniards, who were half nomads (since pastoralism has always been of great consequence in Spain), who were also wholly militarist as a result of the long and painful conflict with the Moors, and who, over and above the sheer lust for lands and gold which impelled them, wanted to spread the faith by the forcible means which had become a passion with them, while they incidentally hunted about for a legendary "fountain of immortality," whose waters, by perpetuating life here, would have cheated the devil of much of his due in the world to come. Probably enough, however, Mexican civilisation may have been in existence for ages, if young compared with the cultures of Egypt and Mesopotamia. The destructive fury of the Spaniards left us little to judge by. But, quite apparently, modification was being wrought just as in the old world.

(e) In south Mexico, and in what is now a rank jungle, ruins of a civilisation are found whose remains are said to indicate the highest culture of pre-Columbian America. This is the civilisation of the Mayas, a people who seem to have struck out the only system of writing which existed in ancient America, who had a calendar superior to that of Russia to-day, and whose architecture was not only massive but also wonderfully ingenious and tasteful, though but

the product of stone implements. Professor Ellsworth Huntington, in his book "Civilization and Climate," suggests that the climate has grown damper in this particular area, and that that may account for the disappearance of the civilisation, moist heat perhaps inducing the lassitude so fatal to the upkeep of energy, as fully commented on in these pages. We can only speculate as to that. But, given favourable climate, the Maya lands, as being particularly well sheltered, would educe a civilisation of the highest order, due to greater maturity being reached through the specially favourable conditions. The remains, therefore, of the mysterious Maya culture confirm the general theory held in view throughout these pages. But the point now is that Central America, being small in area, and nourishing only feeble bands of hunters paralysed by the lassitude of the climate, could never be a real menace to the tillers in the Maya area, nor to the agriculturists settling in the *tierra templada* of Mexico. Furthermore, the art of navigation was but so feebly developed in America before the time of Columbus<sup>1</sup> that no menace could come across the sea; and, had it arrived, it might not have been difficult, by operating from the rampart of mountains within, to hold it at bay on such unwholesome shores. South, west, and east, therefore, Mexico was *inabordable*. But it was approachable from the north. Northern Mexico opens out widely into the great American plains where movement was so easy, as already commented on, and where, therefore, nomadism was at a maximum. Just as the inner plains of Asia generated invasions which sought the ancient shores of the Mediterranean, so the inner plains of North America sent forth nomads, who searched out the lands of the Mexican Gulf, which is known geographically as the "American Mediterranean." When Cortez and his merry men arrived in Mexico they found the power in the hand of the Aztec dynasty, as it is called, which was quite apparently an intrusive stock that evidently had wedged itself in from the nomadic north. That

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<sup>1</sup> In pre-Columbian days the sea in America had no evocative power except in the Caribbean, where ingenious craft were found, and in the far north-west, where prey was more plentiful at sea than on land. The whole interest of the nomads was landwards, while there was nothing to tempt the tillers in Mexico and Peru from their fertile uplands to the forbidding coast-lines.

dynasty seems to have been exploiting what were probably higher native cultures, as did the Assyrian of old, and as did the Turk in our time.

(f) Once more, at any rate, we are face to face with the fact of ethnical heterogeneity within the bounds of a single state. In passing from the hunting *régime* to tillage culture this racial commixtion may have been anciently a source of progress in Mexico, as in the primitive civilisations of the old world. And, while every fresh nomadic intervention might stand for degradation or abasement, that might only be temporary as the life of nations goes, since the greater masses, attuned to the more peaceful ways, could slowly absorb the invaders, strong perhaps just because of their greater savagery. After a certain length of time the culture might as a whole not only reach its old levels, but perhaps soar to still higher heights of attainment, to some extent probably because of the drops of steel that had been added to the blood by the invasion. Renascent Italy is probably a case in point, and so perhaps is Norman France. Since, however, the fertilisation of the culture can always be attained to by collisions that may be without bloodshed, it is seen that violence is by far the longest means round to a desirable enough end. In may be the case, therefore, that the comparatively ferocious Aztec dynasty and stock were being absorbed and adding a stimulating ingredient to the ethnic crucibles in Mexico.

(g) What we do know for certain, however, is that there was divisiveness in the land set up by other than geographical agency—troubles rooting in racial and cultural differences and dynastic wrongs. This state of things immensely helped Cortez and his companions on their way to complete conquest. Few as the Spaniards were in numbers, they had the advantage in fire-arms, and, when the ammunition lacked, Toledo blades were effectual against weapons merely of stone. Even with all that the invaders were almost crushed by the sheer mass-weight of the native resistance, and history has indelibly etched into its pages the *noches tristes* of the Spanish agony. But, if this pioneer adventure had been completely overwhelmed, a better equipped attempt would sooner or later have forced a conquest upon the country, really helpless

against such foes. The first English landings on the Atlantic coast foundered beyond all trace, but the others succeeded against a barbarism much more powerful than the Mexican defence. Regarded from that point of view, the famous *noches tristes* should be regarded not so much as impending calamities for the Spaniards as for the hapless Mexicans, whose civilisation was upset by a fury as fierce as that of any Mongols for loot, but blinder far in its uncalculating spiritual exactions, since the Asiatics were the most tolerant potentates of their time in things religious, and the Spaniards were the most bigoted. Thus the ancient Mexican civilisation, flourishing at the roots of the northern continent in a loneliness that could safeguard more than it could depress the cultural inspiration of man, was given over by fate to an essential barbarism with a mere masquerade of civilisation on its mechanical side; and the riff-raff of Iberia, by their cruelty, bigotry and covetousness, wiped out cultures older than their own (or at any rate more instructive), overwhelming everything in muddy ruin like the wave of an earthquake searching inland along the coast. Defective as the Mexican civilisation may have been at many a point, the unoffending natives deserved a better fate than conquest by peoples so cruel, yet posing as so "enlightened." But the fate of Mexican civilisation may help us better to understand the calamities that overtook culture in obscurer quarters in the unlettered ages.

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(h) It has already been observed that Feudalism may be considered as a sort of half-way house between semi-nomadism and the centralisation which all countries tended to under influences of tillage and other civilising forces. Of course there may be a back-throw to Feudalism by any barbaric intervention disrupting the ancient bonds. There was such a temporary back-throw in Byzantium, and a much longer one in western Europe, setting up *the* Feudalism regarded as typical, if not indeed as exclusive. In Mexico there was a state of things only describable as feudalistic, which might have stood for a back-throw due to the Aztec irruption, if indeed centralisation had ever been attained to in such a geographically segregated country as Mexico. In any case, Feudalism was a fact at the time of the conquest, though doubtless it would have

led on to absolute monarchy in the ordinary fashion. For, though the monarchy was elective, it was perhaps more in a nominal than in a real sense. The emperor was venerated as a god who could command the elements like any sorcerer. Of course his power was hedged round with restrictions sanctified by custom, which made the despot's life less happy than that of an ordinary policeman's. In Mexico superstition took one most unhappy turn. Human sacrifice may once have been a feature in all social systems, and it might even deepen despite apparent advance in other directions. But these and the like evils have been transcended by sympathy working, if with obscurity, yet with real subliminal results. In Mexico things seem not to have got that length, every year apparently calling for more and more human victims to be sacrificed to the sun-god—a circumstance which may have heaped up hatred in some quarters against the dynasty. Sir J. G. Frazer ascribes it all to an astronomic misconception—that the solar fires could only be sustained by supply of human energy. If true, it was a sad aberration. But the incoming Spaniards sacrificed perhaps even more victims to their god of mammon.

(i) Mexican Civilisation, however, had its relatively good sides. Though slavery was a feature of the system it was not a hereditary curse. No one could be born a slave in Mexico. Further, the revenues of the state were not spent in such hurtful and reckless extravagance as those of some European countries of the time. The poor, the widows, the orphans, and the aged had their right to what was heaped up in the royal granaries. It also falls to be noted that Mexico was a commercial country, and (what is almost singular in her case) the aristocracy, instead of frowning upon trade, actually favoured it. In other countries the commercial traveller generally preceded the soldier as well as the missionary, but in ancient Mexico the military and civil powers co-operated most harmoniously for the purpose of promoting trade. The commercial activity was probably due to the fact that there was a great diversity of products throughout the country, and the minerals wrought up into knick-knacks, though not used as tools or weapons, could be easily transported despite the difficulty of the country, because of

the considerable value in the small bulk. Mercantilism being such an extensive activity, it followed that there was a plebeian as well as a servile caste, and full proletarian status might have been reached unobtrusively as in Europe (America) but for the conquest.

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(j) That conquest upset everything to its foundations, the native populations being so mercilessly exploited by the *conquistadores* that whole families, it is said, committed suicide to escape the horrors of life upon earth.<sup>1</sup> A leading fact in modern Mexican history is the evolution of a race of half-breeds, but it is impossible to say that the *mestizos* have been more of a progressive than a disturbing factor in the community. In any case, the pure Indian remains by far the heaviest ingredient in the ethnic vat, which is probably condemned to boil over long enough before the compounds can settle into anything like social equilibrium. In addition to the misrule of Spain being succeeded by the sway of natives of unripe knowledge in governmental methods Mexico, because of its enormous wealth in minerals and oils and its great agricultural potentialities, has got caught in the play of international finance. The stability under Diaz, however artificial, throws a light upon the possibility of military rule even in such a diversified country both as regards its past and its future. The existing instability, however<sup>2</sup> (fomented to some extent by international penetration in its most insidious forms), is no less eloquent of the difficulties of human government due to primordial forces of geography and character in combination. But the country that raised itself as the sole beacon of civilisation in the sea of savage North America has anything but a hopeless future, looking to its most engaging past. Time was with it in the hoary ages that are gone, and time is still with it in the generations to be. And the play of sympathy instead of unbridled cupidity from the outside may greatly abridge the process of true civilisation.

<sup>1</sup> Letourneau somewhere says that a Spaniard ingeniously circumvented the resource to *felo de se* by threatening the superstitious natives that he also would kill himself, and rule over them with a heavier rod of iron in the next world than in the present.

<sup>2</sup> Written in 1919.

Not dissimilar considerations apply to the case of Peru.

(a) Ancient Peru confirms and concludes the moral advocated in these pages as to what may be called "the law of the priority of civilisation"—namely, that culture was originally determined in its geographically possible areas by the greater or less amount of nomadism against which it had to contend. And Peru is unique not only in the geographical setting of her civilisation, but also in some of the characteristics of the culture.

(b) Though the whole of tropical America was not caught in the vegetational swoon mainly characteristic of these latitudes, there were no areas in the tropics at once sufficiently great, dry, temperate, and sheltered to induce tillage and evoke culture. Only on the southern plains of South America did the requisite geographical conditions exist, but the flats were bedevilled by nomadism precisely as in the north, and, indeed, as in all the temperate lands of the world, as we have seen. The peoples, therefore, that became animated by the spirit of tillage, in whatever fashion, had only one completely sheltered area in which to indulge their desires. That was the practically rainless slopes of the Andes.

(c) In South America the rain-bearing winds set in mainly from the Atlantic. The result is that the Andes, which so closely hug the Pacific coast, drain the clouds of their last drop of moisture. Though rain may fall copiously enough on the eastern sides of the hills, the intermontane valleys and seaward slopes may receive practically no moisture. The winds in the Pacific blow off land and, as those which tend northwards advance into relatively warmer areas, precipitation is at a minimum on the greater part of the Pacific slope. The country thus has an intenser desert aspect than in Mexico. It also lacks breadth compared with Mexico, although it has much greater length—some 2000 miles, or about the distance between New York and San Francisco. As the Andes are fairly uniform in their longitudinal development, there is not the same geographical complexity as in Mexico, a circumstance which probably has had its bearing on the more unified social system of Peru.

(d) We do not know what the climatic conditions of



Peru were when men first arrived in the land. We can only presume that they were practically the same as at the time of the Spanish conquest. In that case the following considerations apply. Along the rainless coast fishing would be of little or no account in consequence of the lack of fresh water necessary for human consumption. The sea, therefore, would give little or no encouragement to the hunting life in its pelagic form. On the dry western slopes of the Andes, though game was not lacking, it would not be plentiful in consequence of the aridity, and nomadism would be at a minimum. In contrast with the Mexican hills, however, a domesticable animal frequented the Andes. That was the llama, used as a burden-bearer all through the hills, and also to supplement the vegetarian diet of the people. The wild species, the vicuna, seems to have been preserved mainly for its wool. Since vegetation also was lacking on the western slopes, wild fruits and roots would tend but little to sustain the nomadic life. The hunter's life could be best sustained on the better watered eastern slopes of the Andes, taking the region as a whole. But here a consideration comes in which applies also to the case of Mexico, if in less degree, and which must have had its influence in determining culture on the mountain slopes of the new world. In Peru climates may be very sharply contrasted—"as by the blade of a knife or the breadth of a wall."<sup>1</sup> Thus between the dry and bracing slopes on the hills and the hot steaming valleys on the eastern side of the ridges there may be a world of climatic difference. While the mountaineer might with difficulty have descended into the plains, there was no temptation to plunge into such fever-haunted jungles of savagery. On the other hand, the savage had no power even if he had any desire to attack the aerial cultures in which he could not have remained. For the races evidently require to be inured to such different climates.<sup>2</sup> The Peruvian highlanders have, it is said, comparatively large torsos and extra lung power as a result of their acclimatisation on the heights. There was thus a grand *stratification* of peoples in Peru which must have made for social stability.

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<sup>1</sup> Reclus, *Universal Geography*.

<sup>2</sup> Semple, work cited.

(e) Any nomadic recalcitrance which would manifest itself in primitive Peru may thus have moved *longitudinally* rather than *vertically*. In whatever quarter the spirit of tillage first appeared, its enemies would be strictly limited in their operations. Thus the men who used the water of lakes or the streams issuing from glaciers might be allowed to cultivate their patches in peace, since there could be no overwhelming assault in a land so long but so narrow, with practically no menace from the lowlands on either hand. One successful irrigation venture would lead to another, and that to still another, until the whole cultivable ridges were won to tillage. Unlike the riverain civilisations of the old world, there would perhaps be no fevers to overcome before harvests could be garnered, and no contention with the mighty force of the flooded currents which, wrecking one area, might involve numerous other sections in ruin. Peru thus might be easier won than Egypt, even if, in the long run, more foot-pounds of energy were consumed in the vast irrigation works and in the wonderful highways whose total area is said to have exceeded that of the famous Roman roads. Once, therefore, the races inhabiting the Andean ridges had overcome whatever nomadism was native to their hills, they had nothing to fear from any other quarter in their unique abode. *A priori*, only small savage communities could engage their attention, and there would be more pity than fear in the consideration which they might bestow upon them. That actually seems to have been the case at the time of the conquest. The Incas apparently warred only on a petty scale compared with the other primitive civilisations, with no covetousness of lands, slaves or other forms of wealth, as in the other cases, but as if to get rid of surplus energy, and at the same time to win the remaining savage peoples into the glorious system of the empire of the sun.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The northern Pacific slopes did not give rise to a *linear* culture as in Peru. That may be due to the fact that the Rockies run further from the coast than the Andes, are less capable of irrigation, and the soil is perhaps less suited to cultivation, at least with primitive resources. The Rockies, too, were no effectual barrier to advance from the great interior plains with their undiluted savagery. Hence California was a refuge mainly for the most degraded savages that could least be a seed-bed for culture. The very diffused savagery lurking in the eastern sides of the Andes in the Brazilian forests could not ascend into the regions

(f) In a country whose linear development was three or four times greater than that of ancient Egypt, with a population once perhaps correspondingly superior, ethnic variety must have evolved in the long centuries of settlement. It was probably this variety, and the cultural collisions produced thereby, which acted as a seminal influence in developing Peruvian civilisation, just as in the inventive eras of Egyptian history. At the time of the Spanish Conquest however, although there were perhaps many races in the empire, there were only two main stocks differentiated by speech—the Aymaras and the Quichuas, the latter being the dominant race. So that, considering the extent of the territory, the ethnic amalgamation had become fairly complete. What the precedent political conditions had been we can never know, but, at the time of the Conquest, the usual terminal had been reached in monarchical despotism. But it was quite singular in the manifestations of its political forms. It might be called the *despotisme éclairé*—the most “enlightened” perhaps that ever existed. There was practically no private property in Peru, albeit Socialism in the thorough-going sense which is a common conception in our time had not been reached. But what seems to have been the cardinal fact in ancient Peruvian life was this—that practically all had to work, and to all were guaranteed the means of existence. There was none of that competition which is the soul of trade in every other civilisation, there was not even any trade, and consequently no money—that most condensed symbol of power on our planet. “The product of all the labour in the country was so organised that all got some, and not some nearly all,” as it has been put, although it should be said that the Inca caste got something beyond the bare necessities that the people seem to have had to put up with. But, in any case, there was nothing left to private enterprise as in even the most “patriarchal” of the primitive civilisations. Reclus and other critics of the ancient Peruvian civilisation point out that the methods employed were tyrannical in the last degree,

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beyond. The steepness of the gradient and the complete difference in climate made a perfect barrier between the peoples of the jungle and the mountain. Hence Peru was protected, while California was not.

nobody being able to move away from his allotted task or appointed district without a special permit. This is quite true. But, really, the amount of restriction in all despotisms is exceedingly great. The Guild system fixed up men pretty completely in their avocations apart from the order of the State. The caste system in India does so to-day. And, in Czaristic Russia, a passport was needed to move about just as in ancient Peru. It really comes to be a question then as to whether the small margin of "liberty" allowed in all the despotisms different from Peru outweighed the economic precariousness avoided by the Inca practice? The writer has no answer to suggest, his object being merely to point out the routes of thought that ought to be followed in judging of the problems set up by the solitary instance of pre-Columbian Peru. Letourneau, in his very valuable reasoned compilations, suggests again and again that the special "paternity" of the Inca procedure was but an extension into settled, civilised conditions of the economic solidarity of the primitive clan. That may be true, but it would be surprising indeed if the tendency to private property, which seems to strengthen with decline in savagery, had been avoided in this single instance. Weapons, tools, and other things, as we have seen, may suffer individual appropriation even in the most primitive society, and it is just as possible therefore that Peru, like other states, passed through the *régime* of private property, but transcended it in notable degree through the working of forces which we can only speculate about. State Socialism may be a thing to be purposely avoided rather than welcomed, and, in the measure in which it was attained to in ancient Peru, it was manifest that there was no reconciliation of the paternal principle with the individual liberty which remains a fundamental human desire. Reconciliation indeed may be an impossibility, and society may have only a choice of evils with, perhaps, revolutionary alternations in the ages to come. We can only hope that reconciliation is not impossible, and real social stability attainable without stagnation, let alone decadence. In any event ancient Peru has shown us the *practicability* of socialisation on a tremendous scale, even if the example be one to avoid rather than adopt.

(g) While that may be considered the "note" of ancient Peruvian history, there are one or two other points which the reader should keep in mind in attempting to rationalise this singular instance of civilisation flourishing in lonely grandeur by the Pacific Sea.<sup>1</sup> Given the tool-using power of man, there is nothing really "mysterious" in the special manifestation which does not attach to the fact of instrumentality itself. Peru is just an instance of the evolution of the more peaceful artistry of life, due to special geographical conditions, nullifying the conservative and predatory instincts of the once universal nomadism of the tool-using animal. Inclined as men may be to laziness even in the temperate regions, hunger is always a spur to activity, while we must always, of course, make large allowances for the "instinct of work." Tillage cultures are thus inclined to appropriate the whole cultivable area of their domain, and to undertake any labour however gigantic to ensure the means of life to the multiplying generations. Hence, in Peru, the construction of irrigation works just as in the other primitive cases. Spurred on as has been indicated, the wonder is not that such labour was undertaken, but that it was accomplished mainly with *tools of stone*. But the patience of man is really illimitable, and, given the fact of tools, human energy will accomplish anything, within the physically possible. So, in addition to waterworks, we have the Peruvian high roads, cut often through the living rock, and perhaps excelling the Roman roads as already mentioned. These highways were, of course, designed to secure the administration of the country from end to end. But for the inhospitable character of the coastline, it is possible that greater resort would have been had to navigation for administrative purposes.<sup>2</sup> But raft-like contrivances with sails were available for coasting purposes, and the Inca government actually included in their administration the Galapagos Islands, distant

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(America)

<sup>1</sup> It seems that there were no comings and goings between Peru and Mexico, but that "these two islands of culture in seas of savagery" flourished in absolute independence, and in ignorance of each other's existence.

<sup>2</sup> The Polynesians, who had a far greater stimulus to navigation, evolved really wonderful craft. But so could the Peruvians had the need been equally great.

some five hundred miles from the mainland. The sea thus supplemented the land in the work of administration, as it does to-day in Chili. Despite the length and the mountainous character of the country, the reader will see at once that it yet lent itself to centralisation in complete enough degree. For any recalcitrant sections in the country could be surrounded by the more numerous and powerful elements and conquered in detail—the natural communal character of the land preventing any revolt being harmonious or cohesive. It was because the neighbourhood of Cuzco was as much the natural strategical centre in Peru as the city of Mexico was in the Aztec Empire, or Cairo in that of the Pharaohs, that the Incas ruled from that capital, although it was not perhaps such an “inevitable” site, say, as Constantinople or London.

(h) It has already been indicated that, when Pizarro arrived in the country with his few hundred rapsallions, the Peruvians were only warring for the inclusion of peoples in their empire in a benignant form, unhappily only too rare in human annals. The Peruvians were thus really unwarlike, and, relatively numerous as they were compared with the invaders, they had neither the material resources nor the spiritual grit to stand up against the substantial savagery of the robber bands. For, while the Peruvians wrought the precious metals if using them mainly in ornamental ways that avoided covetousness in their social system, the Spaniards were stimulated mainly by the lust for gold. Peru thus suffered an even greater *débâcle* than Mexico, forcible conversion and immeasurable exploitation becoming the order of the day. But, if Peru suffered in the sequel, so did Spain in the reactions set up within the empire, whose ruin was hastened by the uncalculating zeal for precious metals<sup>1</sup> which could not really enrich the empire of Spain, and for unwilling converts who could not profitably adorn the kingdom of Heaven. Peru, like Mexico, was still to “dree her weird,” as a result of the forced rupture with that past which must remain one of the most remarkable and engaging in human annals.

<sup>1</sup> See before, p. 35, as to “the bullion delusion.”

While in the west European countries were expanding oceanwards, **BYZANTIUM** was rapidly contracting before the advance of the Ottoman Turks, who, it must be repeated, though originally very small bands of warriors, excelled in organising power, and succeeded in virtue of their superior military ability, aided by the use of gunpowder. The fall of Constantinople seems to have been due more to cannon than to the courage of the Turks or the cowardice of the Christians. The European nations by joint action could have saved Constantinople, but it was impossible to secure that, though the last emperor sought help as fervently as did Thiers when France was in agony in 1870. The western nations were suffering a reaction from the old crusading fervour, and though some of them had grown in substance and in status, that very fact caused them to seek out aggrandisement nearer home. Italy became a lure for France as well as for Spain, the latter having grown imperialistic though still struggling with the Moors, while France was the lure for England. The **HUNDRED YEARS' WAR** terminated in 1444, fourteen years after the death of Joan of Arc, whose mystic intervention, though ineffectual, has given a character to this war which is unique in history. Though Joan figures as the saviour of France, and has given rise to ecstatic encomiums, such as that of De Quincey in his most lyrical mood, the reader intent upon the scientific interpretation of history should ponder whether the prosaic truth is not that the task of the English was utterly beyond their power in the very nature of the case, for the reasons already indicated. In any event England, after the peace, tumbled into the Wars of the Roses. It is often pointed out that these destroyed her nobility, and gave rise to a new one, and that this somehow made for progress later on. But this is to overlook the fact that the populace suffered as well as the nobility, and it is perhaps too readily assumed that the new rich were more humanitarian than the old. In any event the reader should be critical of these "portmanteau principles" and keep in mind that the Wars of the Roses were wasteful rather than creative. In the period of discovery that was opening out England's hands were tied behind her back by her bloody dynastic contentions,

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which had their roots still sunk in Feudalism, while France, under the demoniac Louis XI, began clipping the wings of the nobility until, ultimately, there was a centralisation greater than in England, which, however, was not the best thing for France in the long run. But it shows how little "race" has to do with the character of institutions. That is determined more by a general play of circumstances and conditions than an hereditary and immutable psychology.

### THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1500 TO 1600)

The inventions and discoveries of the previous two centuries begin to have full play in this—firearms, printing, and the conscious linking-up of the Eastern and Western hemispheres. It is now that Europe (the most oceanic of the continents with her more mobile and versatile populations, backed up by great if not surpassing agricultural wealth, and latterly by mineral resources in abundance upon which modern civilisation is so broadly based) begins to assert that moral and political hegemony flowing from her world position upon which we have already descanted. The assertion of that hegemony by Europe, with the extension of her civilisations in the new world, is the "note" of history down to our day.

. . . . .

JAPAN in the sixteenth century is, as usual, taken up with the painful extension of her intensive culture, through the river valleys and up the stony sides of the mountains, not altogether at ease in her Feudalism, and contending with political earthquakes in her Shogunate as well as the almost daily shuddering of her soil. She was also imperialistic and invaded Korea in 1592—that country being a bone of contention between her and CHINA as was Calais between France and Britain in the old days. Jesuits too had reached Japan, and were making converts until their indiscreet intervention in politics early in the



seventeenth century led to their expulsion, and to Japan's virtual seclusion for two centuries.

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In INDIA the "Mogul" Dynasty, which was a refinement from the Mongolian invasion asserted itself and, although imperialistic, became under Akbar (a patron of science and art) a power which burns with unexampled brilliancy in the history of the peninsula. Of course we have to remember that this dynastic effulgence might stand for but little heightening of happiness as regards the body of the people, whose prolificness in peace constantly tended to warp the benefits of the stabilities attained to, the standard of life keeping low however high the political thermometer.

PERSIA is also resurgent, attaining to a political status perhaps the most "independent" since the Saracenic invasion, but, unhappily, taking the old hapless imperial turn, less concerned, that is to say, with inward purgation of social vices than to raid into India on the one hand and snatch advantages against the Turk on the other, in the usual blind "irredentist" fashion.

Throughout the century the TURKS went on expanding though suffering occasional frustration even under Suleiman the Magnificent, whose splendour however may but mask increasing economic woe as in Israel under her Solomon, and France under Louis XIV. But, though the Balkans came under the Turkish yoke and even Hungary was overrun, the walls of Vienna permanently stopped the Turkish expansion westward. In this connection the reader should note that AUSTRIA, which would naturally have risen to considerable power as commanding the Danube lands, had her authority greatly enlarged by the fact that she was looked upon as holding the passes of Europe against the Turk. Hence she secured in her favour political adhesions which would otherwise not have existed. She extended her empire by the usual chicanery, and by a series of marriages which were unusually happy in the dynastic as distinct from the domestic sense. Austria then, the early tyrant of the SWISS (whose "liberty"

began and ended at home) is in the confused consciousness of Europe considered to be the answer to Turkey; so it was admitted that "if there were no Austrian empire we would require to create one"—a variant of what Voltaire said of Deity. And just as the longevity of Turkey was due to the difficulty of dividing the spoils, so the longevity of Austria was largely due to her usefulness as a barrier against the Ottoman, and the difficulty of apportioning territories on a dissolution of the Hapsburg lands. Dissolution has come about as regards both empires now, but the spoils problem is far indeed from settlement.

While Austria was holding the passes for south-western Europe, the RUSSIAN peoples, with firearms as their new resource, not only expelled the Tatars, but also began an expansion that became as portentous as it was obscure. The fecundity of the races, presumably always great, had now no real check upon the fertile plains until saturation point could be reached, as in China. And so Russia became as one great rabbit warren in its fertile sections, and the western peoples wakened up to an uneasy sense of realities almost as suddenly as did the settlers in Australia after the introduction of *their* particular pest. Since all communities are distinctively aggressive, as has been so often insisted upon here, it was natural that in the case of Russia "Imperialism" should keep pace with "redemption" at every step, just as in the parallel and contemporary case of Spain. Naturally also, hegemony would accrue to the sections holding the best geographical positions for that particular end, as always in history. In Russia these positions were in the woody tracts round Moscow, which formed the asylum against the nomads, and the point of departure for the *reconquista* as did the Asturian mountains in Spain. But though Castille seized the supremacy later in Iberia, Moscow continued her power as commanding the river systems of Russia, which were so largely the highways of the country, as they continue to be still despite the railways, the roads also being few through lack of necessary metal and good holding soil.<sup>1</sup> Hence the rise of Russia

<sup>1</sup> Now that Russia has been thrown almost completely in upon herself as a result of revolution, it is notable that Moscow has again become the governing capital instead of the "eccentric" Petrograd.

conforms strictly to the principles here enunciated. Her immemorial helplessness was due to nomadic malignities unprecedentedly powerful in the Old World. The innumerable invasions she suffered made her the martyr among the nations. Her rise to independence was due to the new power of the defensive embodied in firearms, while the innate imperialism which she cherished in the midst of martyrdom accounts not only for the conquest of Siberia with its alien tribes before the redemption of all her own Slavs, but equally explains her ceaseless aggressiveness against kindred Poles and dissimilar Turks, and of that search for ice-free ports which became an obsession for her, and a nightmare for both Europe and Asia. And it may be here added that, if aggressiveness is to continue as the political gait of nations, Russia will remain a nightmare, if not indeed something more, for the whole world. Fate has placed the Slavonic peoples in the strategic centre of the Old World. If they were specially weak in nomadic times they have become particularly powerful in mechanical ages, with resources in agriculture, in minerals, and in men, which are enormous in an area as great as the moon at its full and practically as impenetrable. If Russia might have difficulty in conquering Japan or China in consequence of the insularity of the one and the massiveness of the other, she might have no difficulty in swallowing up Persia or other mere political mouthfuls on her borders. Until, therefore, Russia sees fit to disarm, it is not in the least likely that militarism can substantially abate in the immediate future. The political millennium cannot come until that bogey is suppressed by whatever means. But the point is not so much now to explore the future as to explain the past, and to note that the sixteenth century formed the beginning of Russia's greatness for the reasons outlined.

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As regards GERMANY in the sixteenth century, she was receding rather than advancing. If Russia is the strategic centre of the old world, the German lands are equally the centre for Europe. That is why the Germanic tribes have played such a great part in history since Roman times. Despite racial diversities and political distractions of all sorts, the Teutons cantoned in central Europe could

strike north, east, south, and west as the fancy took them. Of course in former times it was the sunny countrysides of the south which were the greatest lure, and, after them, the fair fields of Gaul. But fiefs might also be carved out among the more barbaric Slav races eastwards, and hence campaigns at random against the Slavs and organised assaults by the religious orders in Prussia when Palestine was foreclosed to profitable exploitation. Thus the German tribes were pulled in half a dozen different directions,<sup>1</sup> and, the geographical diversity within largely aiding, we can understand why the country, though maintaining the spectral unity of the Holy Roman Empire as a coherent motive mainly for plunder, yet got split up into a political fragmentariness not to be matched outside Africa. In the end of the day some potentates held only a few acres in fee, with only two or three soldiers at command, and, in one case, the right to *half a man*, so it is said. Thus, under the political pomposity of the empire, did things run to seed on the one side, and to utter ineptitude on the other. About 60,000 lawsuits were in arrears in the imperial courts at Leipzig when the empire was squelched by Napoleon. Some of the litigations too *had been in existence for centuries*. The political diversity, of course, had its own advantages in evoking art through friction and emulation, as in renascent Italy. Southern Germany was great in many respects in this line, and the number of good universities that sprang up in Germany is to be largely explained in terms of the friction and emulation spoken of. Into this Germany so naturally divided came a fresh religious trouble, whose origins we must now consider. By the accident of politics Charles I was not only King of Spain, but also Roman Emperor under the title of Charles V. With the wealth of the new world at his command he was the greatest potentate of his time, although the French king Francis and the English king Henry VIII vied with him in strength, and beat him in pure ostentation—a triangle of despots whose jealousies, fantasies, rancours, and ructions under the stupid, if only

<sup>1</sup> In the east and north, of course, they had to protect hearth and home against relative savagery when not aggressive themselves in these directions, a sentinel attitude only being varied by marauds and *mêlées*, as so long on the Scottish Borders.

half-conscious, backing of their peoples would almost make one despair of human nature. Italy was the chief bone of contention between Charles and Francis, and the two countries engaged in conflicts, epic in their staging, if utterly malevolent in their designs. Charles had the better of Francis, but had no end of troubles of his own, not the least of which were the new religious doctrines that were being propounded to his very beard. Man is a religious as well as a tool-using animal, however little he may be inclined to act up to the strict morality embodied in creeds as distinct from their mere ritualism. In other words, Atheism as a reasoned thing has been the attitude of the very fewest in number throughout the ages. But there was always a certain tendency to *dissent* on the part of some in the sense of refining upon, or simplifying the positive creed, which always inclines to complexity with whatever slow increments. Naturally these simplifications in religion had the same backward-glancing spirit as in politics. Thus, just as the Gracchi looked back upon the primal virtues of the Roman, so did many people incline wistfully towards a renewal of "primitive Christianity" according to their various conceptions of it. "Reform," therefore, was never quite out of the air in any country, although even kingly advocates of it might fail completely against the indurated conservatism of the multitude. But things move all the same, as we have seen in the case of the Waldenses in Italy and the Albigenses in France, risings which were suppressed as was Lollardism in England and the Hussite revolution in Bohemia. The invention of printing came in as an aid to dissent, but it is questionable if the reformed movement even then could ever have made any effective headway on its pure doctrinal merits against the armed power of the State, however "corrupt" the Church might be in any quarter.<sup>1</sup> What happened, however, was that the movement began to be supported by the nobility,

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<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastical corruption has been the rule rather than the exception in history, as has also been toleration of it by the populace which might lampoon but not carry things to an extreme—to some extent because of its sneaking participation in the viciousness criticised. The Catholic Church largely reformed itself as a result of the challenge implied in Protestantism, a thing which she would not have done under orthodox lampooning.

some of them no doubt through good and conscientious motives, but many others for political and economic reasons, the desire of Henry VIII for a divorce, and the desire of gentry innumerable for Church lands bestowed in many cases by dead sires less anxious about their sons than their souls. Italy, the home of the Pope, was too great a beneficiary by the world's tribute to carry reform any effective length. Spain was too Catholic because of her contention with Islam,<sup>1</sup> and too preoccupied with world-conquest to manifest effective reform feeling, although Protestants grew so numerous that their menace gave rise to the Inquisition of evil name. In France, however, the great laboratory of the continent, the reform doctrines not only got popular support, but also aristocratic approval, and they received intellectual embodiment by the austere genius of Calvin, whose style, though reckoned "glacial," makes him one of the founders of French prose. When the Gargantuan Francis had gone to his rest the reformed doctrines made great headway in France, resulting in desperate civil wars capped by a massacre striking as a blood-red sunset in the sky. Before the end of the sixteenth century King Henry of Navarre, thinking Paris was well worth a mass, was seated on the throne, "a Catholic in form but a Protestant in substance," with the edict of Nantes announced as the charter of the Huguenots—a reconciliation which lasted for a hundred years, until the bigotry of Louis XIV prompted a revocation which was the crown of his evil deeds. The complicated motives of the Reformation caused dreadful political oscillations also in the land of Luther, but an equilibrium was attained to there also, but much more unstable than in France, and the upsetting of which in the next century was to give rise to what is perhaps the most terrible religious war in history. The Reformation in the end carried the day in England, Scotland, Scandinavia, Denmark, and Holland, and the north German lands, a fact that has given rise to the dogma in historiography that Protestantism was as consonant with "Teutonic" genius as "Catholicism" was with "Latin"—the theory of race

<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Church was relatively more popular in Spain than in Italy, because of its complete identification with the irredentist movement.

again in one of its most seductive, but really most fallacious, guises. It wholly ignores the fact that the Reformation began in "Latin" lands, that the Teutons were Catholics for more centuries than they have yet been Protestant, and that many millions of Teutons to-day are more Catholic in their real feeling than are millions of Latins, who are drifting wholesale into free-thinking, which surely cannot be of kin with Catholicism in its racial affinities.<sup>1</sup> What is much more plausible is the suggestion that the Reformation succeeded largely to the extent to which landlords were favourable, and the countries themselves were distant from the Holy See.<sup>2</sup> In any case "race" confuses instead of simplifying the problem.

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Art in ITALY in the beginning of the sixteenth century was of the highest order, reaching a culmination perhaps in Leonardo da Vinci, reckoned the most *versatile* of geniuses. Following him in the first half of the century came Raphael, Michael Angelo, Correggio, Titian, and others, while Ariosto and Tasso are the great poets of the period, and Machiavelli wrote his terribly trenchant prose which has made him the "Old Nick" of politics. But, towards the end of the century, the inspiration began rapidly to fail because of the political constriction of Spain, who took the country by the neck and throttled it for many generations, if expediting her own decadence in the effort. But the Italian production joining itself on to spontaneous impulses in other countries brought about many felicities, surpassing even the Grecian in some respects, so strong was the new wine running in the blood of the peoples, despite their distractions. PORTUGAL produced one great poet in Camoens, who made the new discoveries the burden of his song. In SPAIN Cervantes had conceived his "Don Quixote," if he had not yet published it, while Lope de Vega had begun to produce those plays which exhaust all the plots possible for the stage, and from which dramatists have quarried ever since. In FRANCE the poets of the

<sup>1</sup> Of course there are millions of Teutons who also are free-thinkers.

<sup>2</sup> Ireland's continuance in Catholicism was largely due to her opposition to her landlords, who were Protestant but remained essentially alien. In Scotland the bulk of the "Celts" became fanatically Presbyterian, while here and there remaining Catholic along with the landlords.

Pleiade were singing their *recherché* lays, and Rabelais, laughing and shaking in his easy-chair, was producing his sesquipedalian prose, while Montaigne compiled the best book of essays in the world; in POLAND Copernicus issued the book which put the earth in its proper place; in GERMANY Hans Sachs sang and Erasmus satirised; and in ENGLAND Shakespeare is the brightest star, not merely of a constellation, but perhaps of the whole literary heavens.

But, if the Old World (in Europe at least) was rising to a higher constructive life despite all turmoil, in the NEW WORLD the peoples were descending into very Tophets of disaster. Spain, not content with evicting Moors, throttling Italians and Portuguese, dragooning Dutch, and menacing English,<sup>1</sup> ran amuck also in America. The Civilisations of Mexico and Peru had been "discovered" and pounced upon by the Christian rascality of Spain with an indiscriminate ferocity as bad as, or worse than, that of the heathen Mongols, who at least spared the religious feelings of their victims. Not so the *conquistadores*, who exacted from the hapless population their last ounce of precious metals, the unremitting toil of their sweating bodies, and the last stretch of their mental credulity—the forced choice being baptism or death *à la Charlemagne*—often death without baptism, often death in despite of it. Whole communities disappeared from the gleaming waters of the Caribbean Sea, from the *tierra templada* of Mexico, from the hillsides of Peru with their ever translucent skies, hunted out into wildernesses of stone or engulfing jungle, or plunged to serfdom in the mines of Potosi. So in the midst of the mechanical advance of the human race, of which the sixteenth century was the witness, we have once more to face the ghastly fact of moral

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that the sixteenth century saw the emergence of the Dutch as a nation after one of the most heroic struggles in history, while the English defeated the Great Armada, circumstances which have immortalised the family of Orange and the name of Queen Elizabeth. But let the reader discriminate here as usual, and not give all the praise to the rulers, who probably deserved the least part. Elizabeth's stinginess, it is said, seriously hindered the effectiveness of the navy. Yet so exalted is her figure that some people seem to think that she is not only the author of our maritime greatness, but also of the mind of Shakespeare!



inhibition or actual degeneration of the ethical sense on the part of the people best materially endowed, and, alongside the "progress" of which Europe was the exemplar, to place the wailings and woes of dim multitudes as they went down to dusty death in their old homes in the west.

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## THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1600 TO 1700)

In this century, though "no change" is the report as regards JAPAN, it was different with CHINA. There the Manchus conquered the country about the middle of the century, and held it until their expulsion only the other day. But, though they were pastoralists compared with the Chinese, it was not quite a case of the Mongols over again. The Manchus were aggressive like all other communities, and they seem to have been called in to take a particular side in internal struggles that were going on. Like nearly all barbarians before them, they preferred the new home to the old though nostalgia might affect individuals as always happens, but they acted on the principle of "*J'y suis, j'y reste.*" But they were small in number compared with the native population, and, like the Turks, seem to have made headway by their superior attention to firearms, comparatively neglected by the unmilitary Celestials, who had always found their dense numbers and their muddy country the best protection against the invaders. These intruders, too, in some cases might be regarded as rather redeemers, in so far as the intervention was not looked on with indifference as but a palace revolution or a change of "bosses," as happens in the local legislatures of the intelligent United States, where the electors may remain cynically unconcerned. In any case the Manchus conquered the land, if by a simple ejection of some old office-holders and confirmation of others in their places, and by adoption of the laws practically in their entirety—the one striking change being the pigtail, at first a sign of servitude, but afterwards the most cherished of symbols, so transmogrifying is human psychology at times.

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In INDIA, where the Portuguese had tended to supersede the maritime Saracens, the English now came effectively upon the scene, and insinuated themselves also with the Dutch among the coveted spice islands in the east. The great Mogul Empire in this century reached its climax of "splendour" under Aurungzeb, but, of course, was doomed to decay under the commercial pressure from Europe commanding greater scientific resources and less weedy human material.

PERSIA is keeping up its head as an independent state and actually took Ormuz from the Portuguese by the help of the English, whose aim however then was *not* "the self-determination of peoples."

TURKEY had many ups and downs in this century, but had her system reinvigorated by the Grand Viziers of the famous family Kuprili. Before the end of the century, however, the country had come into active contact with Russia, whose greater resources, if more blundering ways, were to drain away the Ottoman strength, and lead to an aggrandisement which simply substituted one bogey for another in the political imagination. Before the end of the century Peter the Great was at the helm in RUSSIA, and was opening out windows for his empire in every direction at whatever cost to proprieties and peoples alike. POLAND also was "great" though anarchic, through the accursed *liberum veto* denounced by all historians, but jealously preserved alike by the native aristocracy and the surrounding powers for whom a weak Poland signified greater strength for themselves. John Sobieski is the great figure of this anarchic but ambitious Poland, with its miserable serfs and utterly rapacious nobility. Sobieski was a great general who saved Vienna from the Turks (1683), but was nevertheless completely slighted by the emperor, who was more sensitive to breaches in the law of caste than in the walls of his capital. Sobieski seems to have swallowed the affront as he did the railings of his wife—a poor henpecked creature of a man apparently who could knock brains out of men's heads but not any sense into them.

The earlier half of the seventeenth century in GERMANY was occupied by the Thirty Years' War. It began in 1618, and was finished only in 1648 by the signing of the Peace of Westphalia. Its fundamental cause was the instinctive aggressiveness so often insisted upon in these pages, with which however religion mixed up in the most dire confusion. While there was a broad opposition between Catholic and Protestant States for "redemption" of peoples, territories, and cities, France, though the "eldest son of the Church," yet saw fit, under Cardinal Richelieu, to join in against the Catholic imperialists who were her blood-brothers in the faith but deadly enemies in politics. A considerable amount of military talent was evoked in the struggle—Wallenstein, Tilly, and Gustavus Adolphus being the chief leaders of the armies, composed to some extent of "patriots," but to a much more important extent of professional brigands of the most cut-throat types who changed sides with facility in true Dugald Dalgetty fashion, and looted and ravished all round the land—an orgy of destruction which debased countries and cultures to the utmost, throwing Germany back a hundred years in her development. And yet, when the desolation brought things to a standstill, the purely military men on both sides who had obstructed the long negotiations for peace could only swear at its advent, throw down their cocked hats in disgust, and keep on rampaging as far as they could, despite the signatures on the parchment. It is whispered that there are military men to-day whom the Armistice disgusted like their brave brothers of old, and whose preference it would have been to fight on to extermination under the inspiration of Bernhardi's "biological imperative."

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The assassination of Henry IV of FRANCE in 1610 temporarily upset the concordat with the Huguenots, who ultimately revolted, but were defeated, and then conciliated, by the terrible Cardinal Richelieu—a political genius who resembled Julius Cæsar in being an epileptic. Though Richelieu did not fight for his own hand like Cæsar, that hand was to be heavy also against the still untamed nobility who were the equivalent of the Senators in imperial Rome, and France was to be headed on the

path of aggrandisement, however unscrupulous, and centralisation, however baleful, which all empires must tread. She attempted to make capital out of every contingency, however much out of line with her professed Catholicism, as in the Thirty Years' War already referred to. Under Louis XIV, who was more of a dandy and a dissembler than a real statesman, France rose to be the most formidable power in Europe, but far more in consequence of her great natural fertility, her industrial and commercial resources, and the inimitable ingenuity of her people, than by the fiats of her despot, whose fantasies indeed led in the end to exhaustion and debasement which should weigh far heavier in the scale against the royal reckoning than any patronage of the arts. Men were great in France more in despite of Louis than because of him. Yet the *Siècle de Louis Quatorze* will probably conserve him some credit to the end of time, despite all his oppressions, bigotries, and blunderings.

In this century SPAIN continues to be a lion rampant both in the Old World and the New. But Portugal, which had been made a vassal by "that dullard Philip II who skulked in his palace by day, and sneaked into houses of ill-fame by night," struggled free from her grasp, and an unenlightened house of Braganza took the place of an unrepentant house of Hapsburg. By the end of the period Spain is visibly on the way to the ruin that must overtake all countries determined to depend more on the enforced labour of other people than the honest industry of their own.

In BRITAIN the chief event in the beginning of the century was the Union of the Crowns under the slack-mannered pedant James, whose ungainly appearance concealed as despotic a heart as beat in the bosom of the dapper Louis XIV. There was, however, peace in his time and increase in commercial prosperity, if little growth in political grace. Whether Charles I was more a saint than a sinner is of little or no consequence in the present connection. What it is important to note is that, drinking in despotism with his mother's milk, he lost his head for alleged infringements of the constitution which had not

brought such a penalty upon any of his predecessors. Why? The answer suggested is that he did not sufficiently take account of the *bourgeois* in Britain, who was more powerful than on the Continent, because our insulation did not allow kings to play off the fear of "the foreigner," as in Europe. Of course religious motives mixed up with economic interests in the usual baffling way, but it is now suggested that the Revolution was a *bourgeois* triumph depending upon a popular dissidence which took as much account of the next world as the merchants did of this. Naturally, therefore, London, as the great commercial centre, was the nucleus of the mercantilism for which Parliament stood—in a word, the British analogue of the older "republicanism." The Revolution triumphed, although Cromwell was only a despot with a difference, acting absolutely in a fashion that Charles could not do because of his lesser talent and weaker will. But it is not the intention to classify Cromwell any more than Charles as saint or sinner, the only idea being to give clues to the abiding principles that determine social conduct apart from the transient influence of personalities small or great. Cromwell fought the Protestant Dutch without no less ardently than he combated Prelacy within, showing how terribly complicated is the life of states. Charles II, with more wit if less conscience than his father, showed how rule could be absolute as well as practically Catholic, and the nation revolted only when the more conscientiously Catholic James was instrumental in rousing the whole tradition of persecution against himself. In King William's time the creation of a National Debt tended to stabilise upper-class elements that might otherwise have recked less of constitutional changes and thirled even Catholics to the throne in opposition to the Stuarts. Britain thus became "Parliamentarian," but certainly not because of some Teutonic microbe in the blood brought over from the swampy regions frequented by Jutes, Angles and Saxons, whose successors have been content with despotism until 1918. No; our "crowned republic," which has set an example to the world and made Britain the mother of Parliaments, was the result of forces that operate in all communities, if with different stresses and strains and peculiar incidences;

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and other nations may not only attain to our status, but even improve upon it if circumstances will allow play to common sense, which is the monopoly of no race in particular.

. . . . .

In the NEW WORLDS, which the Pope divided between Spain and Portugal as one may slice an apple, there was great impingement during the seventeenth century by France, Holland, and Britain, who justly derided such a variation of the judgment of Paris. The French took to the St. Lawrence, the greatest estuary in the world, leading into the most remarkable constellation of inland lakes on the globe, which, in turn, linked on to inland waterways almost inimitable in their *liaison*—a circumstance which caused the French to expand far beyond their natural strength, and to attempt the grandiose but futile “encirclement” of the British Colonies by the river fortresses terminating in the Mississippi. The British, on the other hand, were walled in by the long, blue, forested rampart of the Alleghanies, with their lurking braves; but by their own increase under relative concentration, and by greater alimentation from the mother country, the expansive force of the English-speaking Colonies became irresistible in the end, and broke through the French encirclement as ice bursts rocks asunder.<sup>1</sup> While Spanish and Portuguese, in trade-wind and tropical America, keep dragooning as of old, in the temperate north there begins with the seventeenth century a political experiment which, with all its drawbacks, is one of the most engaging in history. For the present writer, at least, the development is one of intense interest—the story of Roundhead and Cavalier, of Puritan and Quaker, of taciturn Dutch, rare Swedes, and phlegmatic Germans, with an enlarging streak of negroes, all toiling in their several ways at the winning of the land, at felling forests, draining swamps, tilling lands, sowing corn,

<sup>1</sup> The French “chummed” it more readily with the Red Indians than the British, causing dispersion of population. The French, too, stuck to the old *seignorial* system, which militated against initiative and healthy economic expansion. Great estates and absenteeism spoiled the virgin settlement of Canada, even as they marred the immemorial civilisations of the Mediterranean world.

fumbling with cotton, and planting the tobacco that was to ensure such prodigious results to the Commonwealth. A thousand times, in his mind's eye, he has pictured, towards the north, the apparition of a single log cabin, has seen it attract a companion structure, then another, and still another, until a township developed in the clearing, with the smoke curling from the rude chimneys towards the surrounding trees; he can hear the snort of horses, the lowing of cattle, the ring of the smith's hammer upon the anvil, the chatter of children, and the "surly hymn" of the elders in the meeting-house or in the blink of evening fires, while in the "Episcopalian south" planters loll around their wooden mansions and darkies grin beside broad tobacco leaves. Perhaps more curiously than many native-born Americans, the writer has conned the colonial records that speak of Charters granted and withdrawn, Governors imposed or recalled, the decline and fall of officials, the wrangling of assemblies authorised or unaccredited, the friction of communities, states, and religions, with the "smelling out" of witches in the great popular frenzy, the application to fresh problems of government of old European prejudices or precedents, daring *a priori* solutions or high "philosophic" attempts, like John Locke's written constitution for Carolina, which, with its "landgraves" and "palatines" on Germanic lines turned out to be a quite fantastic business which simply would not "function" any more than the first French revolutionary creation upon whose impotence Carlyle enlarges with such gusto. But really the French example followed a British precedent, if only Colonial, which was quite out of line with the mother constitution, whose vaunted merit is that it rests, not upon astrictive writing, but rather upon custom out of which, like Topsy, it "grewed." And over all the incipience there was the endless struggle with the "Stoic of the woods and prairies," which continued for long generations after the supersession of Spaniards and Dutch, the defeat of the French and the annexation of the Provinces, the passing of the Alleghanies, the overlapping of the plains, the piercing of the western deserts, the ascension of the Rockies, and the linking up with the Pacific. What the age of chivalry is to the romance of Europe the

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recalcitrance of the Red Indian is to the glowing annals of America. Had the "simple build" of America north of Mexico not given unlimited play to the largest and fiercest hunting economy left on the face of the earth, the Europeans, on their arrival, might have found themselves confronted starkly with multitudes, as in China, instead of great lone lands kept so by unbridled nomadism. If "Providence" is to be read into history at all, one would conclude that it had specially pre-empted North America for Anglo-Saxondom.

### THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1700 TO 1800)

In INDIA the contentions of the European powers ended in the complete supremacy of Britain, due to superior resources, but also, to some extent, to the genius of Clive and the administration of Warren Hastings, whose very unscrupulousness was probably a main factor in the advance, whatever is to be said of it on other grounds. Hastings' impeachment, though unsuccessful, symbolised a powerful humanitarian feeling in the midst of a commercialism which, in some quarters, has rather increased in callousness despite the growth of Parliamentary systems.

In the eighteenth century PERSIA gave another instance of those powers of militant recuperation which make her history unique for the reasons already indicated. Though pressed upon by both Turkey and Russia she not only freed herself but, under Nadir Shah, started imperialising again, Delhi being taken and plundered by that potentate under the old delusion that national prosperity is in terms of conquest, monopoly, and suzerainty.

TURKEY keeps on the downgrade, but only slowly, because the Christian offensive was becoming more and more hampered by incompatibility of motives and interests. Hungary, however, struggled loose, if only to fall under the system of Austria, whose mountains and centrality formed the bulwark of Christendom against the Turk. Hungary had thus, willy-nilly, to allow her-



self to be only "quasi-nationalised," as happened in the case of later liberations in the Balkans, because of the grudging, hypocritical attitude of the greater powers concerned.

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RUSSIA, in the eighteenth century, developed perhaps more naturally than artificially despite the picturesque efforts of Peter the Great, that unclean but unconventional despot, who was to be followed by Catherine the Great, of German extraction, but of equally unhallowed memory despite her appellation. If the debaucheries of despots could be confined within the walls of their palaces, history might condescend to ignore them. But the pity of it is that the jealousies and hates of which courts are the greatest forcing-ground flow over, not only upon the lives of the natives, but also of the masses of other countries, complicating the common or garden antagonisms of peoples which are sufficiently unmanageable in themselves without these foamings from above. It is to be noted, however, that Peter stamped upon Russia that bureaucratic system which maintained itself, despite immeasurable corruption, until the revolution during the world war, and it is doubtful to what extent the system had been essentially modified up to the hour of going to press. As to Catherine, "the crowned harlot," she was by way of being "enlightened," and actually patronised Diderot and other pioneers of the French Revolution. That, however, did not prevent her from plundering her own people to satisfy her personal desires, or from ravishing other countries to satisfy the common lusts. Potemkin on the one hand and Poland on the other are her chief monuments of fame—the one for undeserved exaltation and the other for unmerited fall despite viciousness in both cases. For Poland was neither better nor worse than her neighbours, but had the misfortune to be without "natural frontiers" and in possession of a *liberum veto* which would have handicapped any nation, and which, as already remarked, was clung to as a principle by the brigands because of its being a sort of open sesame for the furtherance of their designs. So Russia lumbered on her imperialistic way by the operation of forces that were really irresistible by the whole geographic, ethnic,

and psychological disposition of things—a remark which it is intended should enable the reader to “place” in history Charles XII of Sweden, that desperate maniac who had no more chance of succeeding permanently against Russia than he had of reaching the North Pole with his equipment. Charles evidently had the idea that because the “Goths” once conquered in Europe he, their valiant descendant, should have the same rights and privileges by that divine dispensation which strong men down to the Kaiser’s day arrogate with all becoming modesty.

In the eighteenth century, and in the patternless mosaic of GERMANY, there arose a power whose portentousness we are now better able to appreciate since its collapse in 1918. PRUSSIA was erected into a kingdom under the house of Hohenzollern—a dynasty whose origins are lost in the mists of rapacity rather than of antiquity. From small beginnings in heath and sand, acre was added to acre, and province to province by succession, redemption, chicanery, and theft, with “luck” almost constantly favouring the line, such as we sometimes see in commerce as well as in politics. For the success of the Ottomans in their day was a close enough parallel to Prussia, Austria also being a case in point, to mention no others. Though there was ability among the Hohenzollerns, there was no striking figure until the advent of the father of Frederick the Great. And he is remarkable, not for his genius, but for his boorishness, and his miserly fantasies in holding up his thalers and his regiments of purloined giants, never to be put to the proof of actual warfare. At least by comparison with such a father Frederick was a genius, showing that there can well up from most unpromising sources very considerable talent, even if it be of the most Machiavellian kind. For Frederick was the “Prince” in action, albeit in his salad days he had written against the “hellish gospel”; and he was also “enlightened,” giving hospitality to Voltaire and to every idea which did not conflict with his own despotic will. There is no need to recount here how he secretly planned the capture of Silesia despite the famous “Pragmatic Sanction”; how he funked his first battle, but fought like a tiger

thereafter in the wars which followed ; how he was alternately victor and vanquished for seven long years ; how he never quite despaired, though he carried poison on his person ; and how he had established for himself a soul of victory under the very ribs of death by the demise of a Russian Empress who was his enemy, and the accession of a Czar who was his friend and admirer. Are not all these things written in the gospel according to Carlyle, in which history is expounded mainly in terms of "Heroism" (plus or minus), with God behind the scenes as a rather vague and distracted director of events ; and also in the works of Treitschke, who had no doubt at all of the divine direction of things through the House of Hohenzollern ? The reader may stick to that view if he pleases, but he will require to admit that the Deity is impartial in his patronage, since Islam, through the Ottomans, had even more conspicuous triumphs and, ultimately, a less terrible downfall, for the sultans remain while the Hohenzollerns have vanished. The worst of the transcendental interpretation of history is its perpetual vagueness and its Zoroastrian dualism in pitting the devil against God when the latter does not serve the immediate purpose. As against this semi-Hegelianism the reader is invited to consider the purely mundane but comprehensible thesis that Prussia, having the appetite common to communities since the human dawn, arose and expanded in virtue, not only of the "luck" already referred to, but also of such geographical features as have favoured even African dynasties in times past, but which escape all eyes not constantly purged with the euphrasy and rue of plain common sense. Just as Assyria had advantages in Mesopotamia, just as Persia had greater advantages still as regards Eurasia, just as Rome had commanding advantages in the world of her time, just as Austria was a fortress built by nature for herself in the Danubian *terrain*, so Prussia had analogous advantages in the north German territory when the growth of population and science made a split as inevitable between north and south imperial Germany as they made between east and west in imperial Rome. Berlin, though on only a comparatively small river, the Spree, commanded the larger navigable streams with which it was connected

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and was the converging point for commerce in a rapidly expanding world. On the civil side its rise is as intelligible as that of Chicago, though in the beginning it may have dealt less in corn, cattle, and pigs. On the military side the explanation is no less sufficing. Just as barbarians tended to dominate civilisations until the age of gunpowder, so to-day, in a world remaining so militarist at heart despite all advances in commerce and science, *it is the more barbaric sections in a community that naturally dominate the others unless these be whole-heartedly for peace*, and wholly peaceful the Germans never have been. Thus the northern Teutons, coveting the Baltic, hating France and Austria with an equal hatred, and fearing Russia because of its multitudinousness if not of its science, were forced to rally round Berlin as the southern states grouped round Vienna, even if there was no disinterested love on any side. Prussia, then, is another instance falling strictly into line with the principles of geography and psychology here held constantly in view, and that not only as to the rise to power, but also as to the sudden fall, unsurpassed almost since Assyrian times. But Germany, unlike Assyria, has not been overcome to the very base of its life, although the pillars of its military temples have been meantime overthrown. With her central geographical position, her fairly homogeneous peoples and traditions, and her natural resources (however deeply mortgaged meantime) Germany will not only survive, but also flourish again, but, it is to be hoped, on utterly different lines from her past, strewn now with all the ruin of ineffectual barracks and lost battle-fields.

Though, in the eighteenth century, AUSTRIA lost to Prussia, as just stated, she kept oscillating like one of those immense rocking-stones that yet require a tremendous push to upset the balance. Circumstances have given an aureate air to her queen, Maria Theresa, who, though imperialistic, had still the semblance of a conscience. When her old enemy, Frederick the Great, irreverently invited her and Russia sacramentally to partake of the body of Poland she hesitated, and it is said the partition weighed on her mind to the day of her death. Her son Joseph was the most striking instance

of the *despotisme éclairé* of the century. He contemned Court conventions, defiantly set them all at nought, and tolerated all religions. But his enlightenment did not include renunciation of imperialism, and he met his death through fever contracted in fighting the Turks. Meantime his sister, Marie Antoinette, had got caught up in the French Revolution, which was to involve Austria in the most terrible humiliations she had experienced up to that time.

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So comparatively weak had SPAIN become in the beginning of the eighteenth century that Louis XIV of FRANCE tried to make her his footstool, but his attempt at "abolishing the Pyrenees" was unsuccessful, knocked to smithereens by the victories of Marlborough, who was a great general but a corrupt and vacillating politician, and almost as henpecked as John Sobieski. Louis XIV died leaving his country fiscally exhausted by his wars and intellectually maimed by the expulsion of the Huguenots. He was succeeded by his great-grandson, Louis XV, who started life as the "well beloved" and died at the opposite extreme of the national feeling. He was too young to reign, and the notorious Duke of Orleans was appointed regent. Shamelessly immoral as the Duke was, his policy was so comparatively enlightened that it has been said "Nothing in the history of this age is more remarkable than the fashion in which the immense blunder of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was cured under the Regency and under Louis XV by the infiltration of fresh population."<sup>1</sup> But Louis trod the primrose path of dalliance himself, and it is said that one of his mistresses was responsible for the war against Frederick the Great, engineered to avenge a lampoon against her by that versatile monarch. Louis died "in the odour of sanctity but in the malodour of public opinion." Then came Louis XVI, the amateur locksmith and less than amateur statesman, and Marie Antoinette, the most enchanting vision on an orb which she hardly seemed to touch, and the crown of a system which, according to Burke, made vice respectable by subtilising it. In plain fact, Marie Antoinette seems to have been fascinating more in the

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Robertson, *Evolution of States*.

millinery sense than any other, and, remaining an Austrian at heart, preferred the interests of her old home to those of her new hearth. Théréupon followed the French Revolution. It was not the greatest of social explosions, for China seems to have had ebullitions over a greater area and among a more numerous people, and the present Revolution in Russia bids fair to outgo the French also. But the French Revolution is at once the best vouched, the most picturesque, and the most influential of explosions. It, and its sequel in Napoleon Bonaparte, have a whole literature to themselves—exceeding a hundred thousand volumes, it is now reckoned. The question meantime is not to canvass this literature for guiding ideas so much as to apply the principles already established. The truest thing that can be said about the French Revolution is that it was the result of “misrule.” But this does not carry us far. Indeed none of the continental nations at the time were in any better case than France, and some were actually worse, but they did not revolt.<sup>1</sup> And since France had been practically quiescent for a thousand years under misgovernment which was at times atrocious, it will not do to say that the French revolted just because they were French, as some have argued. But the statement may yield a clue, if not in the sense intended. As has already been noted, the French are an amalgam of the most intimately mixed races since palæolithic times—a fact which may account for the high average of natural intelligence in the land as distinct from the product of the drilling methods of the Germans. French initiative, having long proceeded on mechanical and artistic lines, now sought a path in politics when the way was no longer barred, nor the nation’s mind and strength completely occupied. That, indeed, is the suggestion now put forward. Misrule there certainly was, but the “feudal” burdens remaining were not so heavy as in other continental cases, nor so uniformly oppressive as is sometimes suggested. Small holdings seem to have been increasing, and districts varied considerably as regards popular hardship and comfort. But it is difficult to say that there was more

<sup>1</sup> “The peasant in France was more free, more rich, and more happy than in the bulk of other European countries—especially Germany” (Correard, *Précis d’Histoire moderne*, p. 341).

combustible material lying about than in other times ; indeed there was perhaps less. *But there was a greater indisposition to remain subject to political abuse* in consequence of the general educative influences at work—the intellectual searching after “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity” in ceaseless literary speculations, the example of Parliamentary Britain with its practice of “liberty,” and the stimuli of the American Revolution with its constitutional assertion of “rights” to freedom and equality, and the like. France played a great if not a decisive part in the liberation of the Colonies, but the expenses incurred made her fiscal condition almost desperate, while the soldiers returning from the new land of “liberty” undoubtedly infected the multitude in a democratic direction. Discontent there was, due to abuse and special hardship resulting from harvest failures. These sent hungry and angry men into Paris in 1789 whose recalcitrance may have had a determining influence in the explosion, *but only by determining the exact moment of its occurrence.* Change could conceivably have come about without explosions, as in other cases before and since, and convulsiveness may thus have been an “accident” of the situation rather than the cause of the change. In any event, through a combination of causes, violence with extremely picturesque incidents did occur, challenging authority in its encrusted forms, and demanding the institution of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. These terms were construed extravagantly at the time, and have come to stand for discredited extravagance since with whole masses of people. But the reader should be careful on this point. *Political* liberty on democratic lines, which was what the level-headed sections wanted, was no extravagant demand but a real need of the times. Then again Equality meant only that, *in the eye of the law*, all men should be considered alike, and that preferences should not be shown as in the hideous rankings then obtaining ; the real doctrine was, not that men are equal in their character or ability, but that there should be opportunity for all under conditions as equal as possible. As regards Fraternity the only extravagance was in thinking that the mere expression of a counsel of perfection could have any real effect so long as the strife of classes and nations (based upon the doctrine of private

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property and of economic monopolies) was to continue. But, all the same, it is an aspiration which is being avowed everywhere to-day more ardently than ever. The Revolution having broken out, by whatever combination of causes, it is to be particularly noted that, though popular ebullience (which was not confined to Paris, though the capital was most effervescent) achieved more notable triumphs than in any other rising known to history, the *directing power* fell completely into the hands of the *bourgeoisie*. Now the *bourgeois* is really a very old member of society. He probably existed in ancient Babylon in its more mercantile times, though he may have lived a submerged life in that land of very intensive tillage pre-occupied with irrigation and with the barbarians never far from the floods. That pest could best be kept at bay by a "strong man" symbolical of unity in the general consciousness, if often only proving an image of brass with feet of clay. The *bourgeois*, at any rate, was apparent in Phœnicia, in the Grecian city states, in republican Rome even, and, *in excelsis*, in renascent Italy. His is the "hidden hand" in the earlier intrigues against the monarchical idea everywhere. He had a hand in bringing Charles I to the block and, later, in chasing James from the throne, in installing William and Mary, in backing up Queen Anne, in defeating the Pretenders, in snatching the power from the boorish Hanoverians ignorant of English, and in making Parliament the temple of "liberty," chiefly in his own interests, but with a general "freedom" which made the mouths of Frenchmen water. It was British insularity which gave the *bourgeois* a chance in England much earlier than in France, exposed as the latter country was to continental pressures favouring the "strong man" idea, just as in ancient Babylon. Whether or not that be the correct diagnosis, there is at any rate no doubt that freemasons and merchants took hold of the situation early in the French Revolution, and gave directing power to the immense popular energy which they subtly sterilised when that served their turn. Of course there was more at work than this, many of the landlord class being genuine reformers, but always in a *bourgeois*<sup>1</sup> direc-

<sup>1</sup> There is really no defining this term, which is yet so handy in discussion. It may be said to stand for vested interests mainly mercantile as distinct



tion. But it is true to say that the French Revolution was essentially a triumph of the *bourgeoisie*, which thereafter became the governing power in most civilised states without any revolution—content as it was, in most cases, to *adapt* institutions rather than to upset them, as in France, whose case is exceptional in political evolution. It is of course impossible here to summarise, let alone rationalise, the interesting features of this most picturesque of occurrences.<sup>1</sup> But a few compendious suggestions may be advanced.

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1. In the eighteenth century the whole world was moving forward in scientific ways which tended to involve political readjustments. Britain, through her special conditions, had earliest embodied the new political spirit in "Parliamentarianism," with the *bourgeois* at the helm. The Continent lagged behind because of the greater stiffness of the social soils, which there maintained military and feudal abuses in greater degree than in more industrial Britain, whose mining and factory conditions, however, set up problems of their own.

2. Since France held not only the most intelligent peoples on the Continent, due to the unceasing play of influences streaming towards her as a centre and as constantly radiating out from her, it was natural that, though she might have less Feudalism than other states, she should yet be the first continental nation to become

from the older despotic systems leaning on the land—the *bourgeois*, of course, perhaps having a foot both in the warehouse and the country, and backing up or opposing the landed interests according to his needs. In Britain the *bourgeois* favoured the repeal of the Corn Laws because that helped his trade. On the other hand, it was the landlord class which insisted upon the Factory Laws against the merchants, professedly in the interests of the "hands," although their own agricultural workers had as much need of protection. But landlord and *bourgeois* joined hands for Tariff Reform when foreign competition seemed to be striking at the root of their prosperity, Britain having ceased to be the workshop of the world, and Germans and Americans having become terrible bug-bears. So complicated are the issues in society. But if we are to go on arguing at all we *must* have such a term as *bourgeois*, and no harm will be done if it is used with care.

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle's history gives the most vivid account of things, but it is not reliable, adds mysticism instead of affording elucidation, and yields but a sense of the nervous tension of those times, which it is well to realise, but which may be exaggerated by the histories. Aulard's works are much more to be commended for insight into positive details. As against Taine's later Toryism, the reader should compare Kropotkin's *Great French Revolution*, written from an opposite point of view.

*bourgeois* in more thorough form than the old mercantile republics. Being nearest to Britain, that country naturally stimulated her most *politically*, if she excelled the island culture in many forms of art. American republicanism, too, directly affected the mass-forces welling up towards expression in France, which might have achieved their end without explosiveness, as already indicated, but for a combination of conditions which made the outburst specially severe rather than unique. For, in addition to the case of China, already mentioned, Britain had her "revolutions" too—one of which involved the beheading of a king without such interference from outside powers as happened in the case of France.

3. Since Court ostentation, aristocratic extravagance and depravity, and fiscal disorganisation were not new things in France, and actually had been severer in their popular incidence in times past, they could not have led to the convocation of the States-General *had there not been a new compulsitor which would not be denied*. In a word, if there was an inevitable tendency towards Parliamentarianism, due especially to the *bourgeois* who had "arrived" in earlier periods in history and was at the time influential in England and America, a representative assembly in some shape or form could not have been avoided ultimately, even had there been no special pressure of abuses and famine.

4. But, the convocation having taken place, there is no reason, except the stupid *intransigence* of the Court and its backers, why peaceful solutions could not have been reached, since everybody was loyal and the majority even "royalist." Violence, then, in its real origins is to be traced to the unbending Toryism of the aristocracy in Church and State, who showed that they would stick at nothing to preserve their privileges. The marvel rather is that violence on the popular side did not enter earlier into the reckoning, considering how naked was the menace to the new claims, really formulated moderately in a right royal spirit, as befitted a people so long besotted with the idea of divine right.

5. The challenge having been thrown out in France by the Court party, it was natural that the *bourgeoisie* should make both open and secret use of the public, *which yet had*

to be galvanised towards democracy rather than restrained from a sanguinary pursuit of it. Even after the fall of the Bastille a "constitutional" monarchy was easily possible, but the flight of the king towards his irreconcilable nobility, standing tiptoe on the German frontiers ready to invade the land by whatever "foreign" help would assist, made the situation hopeless. The fate of the Czar in our day, suspected of "crimes" analogous to those of Louis in his, can let us better understand how the Bourbon may be said to have descended from his coach at Varennes to mount the scaffold in Paris.

6. Extreme dangers generate extreme actors whatever their views. Since the menace from Germany was nakedly aristocratic the answer within France naturally shaped itself as extremely democratic, and the Red Terror inside was but a reflex of the White Terror that would have operated from the frontiers and did actually supervene in the end. The incipient white was thus the "cause" of the actual red, just as the long-continued Czaristic deeds have their answer in the Leninism of to-day. But even the Red Terror in France was not so bad as it had been made to appear. Some few thousands of people in the course of some months lost their lives after huddlings in prisons and after trials that may sometimes have been but a parody of justice. But, after all, there *was* a trial, and an open-air verdict, lacking under monarchism, which naturally preferred methods *in camera obscura*. And the sum total of *its* victims (done to death in darkness by the secular pressures of everyday rule, and of ceaseless intrigues which left victims to rot in dungeons) is known only to the recording angel. But a greater and ghastlier total it must be than that of the Red Terror.

7. It has already been conceded in these pages that *personality* may at times determine historical contingencies, although it was suggested that it was of much more consequence to try to elucidate the operation of general principles for understanding the play of the forces concerned. In China and in Arabia centuries before this career had been thrown open to talent, and in the French Revolution the doors swung back to their furthest extent for the entrance of good and evil influences alike. Here, of course, it is impossible to enter into appraisements of the

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great crowd of characters concerned, not only through lack of space, but also because there is no question of principle involved. The reader of the revolutionary records will follow personal predilections as well as be swayed by special pleadings, with which the literature of the subject is studded. He can only be cautioned against such labellings as "Robespierre, thou sea-green incorruptible!" "Windbags!" and the like, and be advised to judge even the most maligned characters by comparative tests that will apply to aristocrats and democrats alike, and not to exalt Charlotte Corday because she was young and beautiful, nor summarily to condemn Marat because he had a skin disease,<sup>1</sup> and "croaked" according to Carlyle. The writer is no extremist, but he has often had the idea that the scales have not been held equally in assaying values in this as well as in other connections.

8. Though the French Revolution was essentially a *bourgeois* success, yet the people got great gain not only in the abolition of the feudal abuses, but also in possession of the lands to an enlarged extent, though perhaps not in such sudden, wholesale fashion, as the night of emotional renunciation in the Assembly would naturally lead readers to believe. Economic readjustment was a laborious and painful business, as it seems also to be in Russia to-day. But, at any rate, a peasantry aggrandised in its possessions and heightened in its manhood was a chief legacy of the Revolution.

9. Political readjustment was just as painful as the economic readjustment. One main reason for this was the terrible distraction caused by the revolutionary wars. But the task was also inherently a very difficult one, because the perpetual strife of interests came in even here, since not only every section, but also every individual, had his own idea of the constitutional house to live in—the general plan, double-chambered or single-chambered, the separation of "functions," and what not. Let the reader, therefore, remember all that when coming across any sneer at "paper constitutions," which are said to be a weakness of the "Gallic races." But what, then, of the United States

<sup>1</sup> Contracted, it is stated, while hiding in the sewers from monarchical persecution.

of America, with its apostolic fervour over *its* structure so very revered that it takes a generation to add an inch to it or chip one off it? And even if our own constitution “grewed,” it is to be remembered that strife was not always absent from the process. If in our case we do not see grim struggles over an original draft, we have yet seen contentions that almost threatened bloodshed over amendments attempted to be tacked on to elusive “custom,” or to positive precedents hidden away in unused archives thick with the dust of centuries. On this subject the writer has no preference either way, and his only aim is again to attempt to hold the balance even, and to let the reader judge for himself with all the main factors in view.

10. Everybody knows how, though France rocked with dissension, trickled with blood, and was walled in with enemies, she not only beat back the invaders from every frontier, but actually inverted the aggression and stood triumphant on frontiers enlarged beyond the dreams even of royalist ambition. Frenchmen are naturally proud of this great feat, which stirred the blood even of some royalists, despite their irreconcilability. Here the object is to account for it rather than to laud it. It was simply a case of new talent making play with fresh popular enthusiasm, and arming itself by ingenuity when the old sources failed. When the blockade stinted the armies of gunpowder, sulphur was found in old walls and structures of every kind, and enthusiasm often supplied the place of discipline, while generals and officers, untrammelled by the old military traditions, struck out refinements of their own which sent the lumbering imperialists back in dire confusion. But, strategically, France was not so weak as she appeared to be under the universal assault. She held the advantage of “interior lines” nearly all the time, and thus the old geography assisted the new valour towards victories which are amongst the most spectacular in history, and certainly not the least meritorious.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century Anne became queen in BRITAIN. Hallam called her that “stupid woman.” Her denseness, however, was not of the meddling type that leads nations to ruin by individual fantasy.

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On the contrary, Anne's stupidity allowed greater play to Parliament embodying now so much *bourgeois* spirit, and that was intensified by the fact that the non-linguistic Hanoverians had necessarily to depend upon the work being done by ministers unfavourable to "despotism," who naturally did not scruple to enlarge the scope of their authority, as all do into whose hands power is placed. The Parliamentary union was a great source of strength to the country. It enlisted the commercial interests of the Scots, thereby making them all the more reluctant to back up the Pretenders sprung from their own loins, whose campaigns were doomed in advance by the whole circumstances of the case. The best thing which the Stuarts ever did was to add a touch of wailing lyricism to ballad literature by the hands of people, many of whom would have opposed the political pretensions of a stock sublimated by its failure when it would have been intolerable in its success. France and Spain were, of course, warred with through the usual mixed motives and by the old method of transforming alliances. The "war of Jenkins's ear" is a notable episode wherein a vamped-up incident was used to goad the instinctive national aggressiveness into overcoming a statesmanship that had the gift of comparative sanity in these matters. For Walpole, though best remembered by the public as the author of "Every man has his price," saw further than many of the class to which he belonged, but failed to resist the "hidden hand" of the *bourgeoisie* interested in the Spanish smuggling trade, and enraged when *its* ships were caught, while overjoyed when Spanish ships were seized at the same game. It is the old monopolistic idea of trade in full blast among equally unenlightened practitioners. On the whole Britain aggrandised herself, and notably in America. There the British, aided by the Colonists, gained Canada definitely from the French in 1763. An unexpected result of this victory was the loss of the American Colonies only a few years later, due to a confluence of economic fallacy and political shortsightedness. In these Colonies (whose history is so supremely attractive to the student of formative influences on national lines, and of which America is by far the most instructive example) initiative was at a maximum—the "newness"

of the country evoking the faculty to the very utmost. There were two dangers which the Colonists had constantly to encounter—the Red Indian on all frontiers, and the Frenchman in the north, with the chain of forts in the backwoods and prairies. Of these two the French were perhaps the more formidable, and hence the Colonists instinctively backed up the mother country in its wars in Canada. But, when the Gallic menace was definitely removed, the Colonists suddenly grew assertive against the mother country, and that too over the taxes necessary to wipe off the debt incurred for the joint adventure. Even American students are to-day avowing that there may have been a certain “cussedness” in the conduct of the Colonists in suddenly making taxation without representation, which had been the custom thitherto, a first principle incapable of adjustment except by the complete capitulation of the mother country. There may be plausibility in this contention. But the answer is that “cussedness” is a regular feature of politics, and it redounds to the credit of Britain that so many of her statesmen could virtually waive the constitutional view, or actually turn its point in applauding its “brothers” on the other side of the Atlantic. For it must be remembered that there was a serious constitutional struggle at home. George III, the first English-speaking Hanoverian (puffy, stodgy, and unattractive compared with the Stuarts in the dark lankiness which is limned for us in history), was after absolute power in his own fashion. And it was his stuttering stupidity in alliance with Lord North’s smiling Toryism which lost the American Colonies, if anything human did, in not recognising that a new situation had arisen in which wisdom consisted in blinking or completely foregoing precedent, and taking that line of least resistance which should ever be the guide in politics. But, though wisdom might have prevented the sunderance of the states on the actual issue which presented itself, it probably would have been impossible to continue to keep the Colonies within the orbit of the British Empire. Practical independence would have come about upon some other ground, and probably even under more dangerous circumstances—the complications of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars for instance, or the terrible problem

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of the slaves. All things considered, therefore, it was perhaps better that separation happened at the time it did, though it can never be sufficiently deplored that it came about violently, and resulted in antagonisms which are not yet lived down in practical affairs. The War of Independence was, on the whole, a very desultory business due to the straggling nature of the revolt and the practical equality of the forces engaged. For the Colonies, despite their ardour, had difficulty in keeping up a concentration of their forces which were drawn from such various quarters and over such considerable distances. The Colonists had practically no professional soldiers, but only volunteers under short service, who were constantly returning to their trades or farms. On the other hand, the British Army was composed of regulars, if also largely of mercenaries; it had full command of the sea, and all its wants could be supplied from home, while there was a *point d'appui* in Canada which proved completely loyal.<sup>1</sup> The French Canadians hated the British less than they did the Colonials, who had been their constant trouble, and with whom they had little or nothing in common. The change to British government was standing for real amelioration to the French. So they remained loyal, despite even the call to them to rebel when their countrymen, under Lafayette, made the appeal. But, though the British had the best of it in many of the engagements, they could never bring things to a decisive result. Unable as the Colonials were to join in a united heave which would have landed the regulars in the Atlantic, they were yet able, by their irregular tenacity, to rob every British victory of its essential worth. Despite their more scientific attack, the British (as in the Hundred Years' War in France and as Napoleon in Spain later) felt the ground constantly giving way beneath their feet, undermined as it was by the ceaseless, if diffused, popular insurgence, which could no more be quelled than the waves of the sea. No man did more to stimulate the recalcitrance on its popular side than Tom Paine, whose credit however suffered severely by his subsequent hetero-

<sup>1</sup> Many "Tories" (or Colonists who remained loyal) took refuge in Canada rather than remain under the flag of the Republic. The reader should note that the Colonial insurgency was not quite so unanimous as is too often concluded, because of an omission to note this fact of Toryism.



doxy, which is constantly misunderstood as "Atheism," when, in point of fact, Paine was an ardent Deist!<sup>1</sup> Yet Paine electrified the American Revolution if Washington directed it. There is no doubt of Washington holding the first place in the credit of his country, but there is much dispute as to his real military merits. Without pronouncing upon that, it is quite probable that he and his republican volunteers (who were always gaining experience as they went along) would, in the end, have worsted the British without the aid of France. But the intervention of that country, which was to have profound reactions on its own political conditions, turned the scales in favour of the Colonists. But, with the recognition of independence, "the times that tried men's souls" were not nearly over. The inchoate conflict of interests which had hampered the cohesion of the states broke out in its sharpest form with the departure of the British on the troopships.<sup>2</sup> All the difficulties of constitution making appeared in their naked form, as also did the play of the more sordid interests intent on their special aggrandisement at whatever expense to the commonweal. In the strife between classes, communities, and states and between the principles of centralisation and autonomy, the country seethed to its elemental depths, and it can hardly be said that the ideas that gained the day were advanced ideas. Though a "Republican" form of government had been adopted, the monarchical idea was still so essentially ingrained in the minds of the community that powers were conferred upon the President which afterwards made the mouths of European monarchs water. But Washington, the first President, being personally as unambitious as his younger contemporary Napoleon was the reverse,

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Oman, who should have known better, repeats the mistake in a contribution which he made to the *Historians' History of the World*. The persistence of this "Atheistical" idea among lettered men is rather curious. The writer has heard clergymen thunder from the pulpit against the "Atheism" of Robespierre, who actually prosecuted citizens because they did not believe in the God whom he worshipped as the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. For Robespierre was a Deist like Paine.

<sup>2</sup> Washington was terribly disgusted by the selfishness, stock-jobbing, and "profiteering" that went on among the patriots surrounding him on every side, and during the war he almost threw up the command in disgust. Thus Patriotism never walks with untrammelled feet, as all nations found to their cost in the world war.

laid down his power at the end of his second term, and thereby set up a tradition which has since been defied, but not yet countenanced. Washington's modesty is perhaps not his least title to fame. BRITAIN was hardly free from the imbroglio when she was involved in war with revolutionary France. The only point to be noticed in this connection is that, if Britain was dictatorial and should not have interfered in France's internal affairs, especially after beheading one of her own kings, certainly France was not blameless. It is illustrative of a basic principle of this essay—the instinctive aggressiveness of all communities of man—that the Jacobins, even when declaiming about Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, were imperialistic enough to attempt to force their nostrums upon other nations, and so little enlightened as to think that trade burglary was a source of international profit and prosperity. Fanatical for freedom of trade in France, they were equally convinced of the virtue of strict protectionism on the frontiers, and the "capture" of trade by hook or by crook outside. Hence the motives at work were as confused as those in any of the ancient issues, and the old hopeless round started again worsening peoples and enriching only profiteers. Though France, at midnight on December 31, 1799, was victorious on land, Britain, through the genius of Nelson, was triumphant on the sea. It was that sea-power which was to determine history in the early nineteenth century, as again with us in 1918.

## THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

(A.D. 1800 TO 1900)

The late Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace wrote a book entitled "The Wonderful Century," which was a panegyric of the last era of human history. And the nineteenth century was really "wonderful," at least as regards its mechanical advance. The steam-engine, used at first for pumping water from mines, was applied to the propulsion of boats, to the haulage of waggons on railways, and to every conceivable kind of industry. And just as steam propulsion conquered space, the electric telegraph annihilated

time. A thousand other lesser inventions and devices assisted in making the world "one" as never before. And the words of Columbus came true in a sense which he did not dream of—" *El mundo es poco.*" The nineteenth century is distinguished as the era of exploitation of extra-animal forces for human purposes, the tapping by mechanical means of the stores of energy in nature, with developments and effects of which we can see no end. That is the "note" of nineteenth-century history, with Europe as the great mechanical missionary in virtue of her ethnic as well as her material resources, the North American civilisation (which is just an extension of the European) joining fully in the effort and being the pioneer in many things.

Unhappily, moral and social advance still lingered in the rear of mechanical progress. But, even here, we can exclaim with Galileo, "*Eppur si muove!*" Humanitarianism was spreading, if but slowly and painfully. Serfs were freed in Russia by imperial Ukase, while liberationist feelings were still unripe in the mass affected, though assertiveness was not quite wanting—a state of things which can make us better understand that passivity of peoples which is the greatest monumental fact in the history of civilisations. Slaves were freed throughout the British colonies, but not until after a heroic agitation by zealots and a stiff enough Parliamentary opposition, which, however, was placated by compensation in "spot cash." In Brazil a time limit was resorted to instead. In America, where the evil was particularly gross as already remarked, it required one of the bloodiest civil wars on record to strike away the chains of the slaves. For that was at the root of the question of "State Rights" over which the issue was nominally fought. And, in America, it was more the northern whites than the southern blacks who made the pace in liberationist ideas, while many Europeans took the Confederate side, Gladstone, for instance, who was yet so humanitarian in the end, though Bright and Cobden and other notable statesmen helped to keep things on an even keel throughout complications that might easily have led to war. And, if we were so near to strife with America as an independent state, we might have

been involved completely if a Colonial tie had still persisted, and there would probably have been a civil war in Britain parallel with that in the States. So that independence was probably a great gain for both countries, if only the memories of the ancient hostilities and of the younger antagonisms can be lived down completely. In connection with the American Civil War the reader will find much speculation to the effect that, if certain things had been done, or not done, as the case might be, the South might have won, and maintained an independent Confederacy on the continent. It may be conceded that the South had greater military talent than the North, although Abraham Lincoln dwarfs not only the statesmen on the other side, but seems also somewhat to overshadow the figure of Washington himself. But, though Lee was probably the greatest general that America produced,<sup>1</sup> the reader should consider that nothing ultimately could have availed against the greater resources of the North. It was a case of Hannibal and of Napoleon over again, with differences, of course, which do not quite vitiate the parallel. The North had greater forces on land and on sea, and exhaustion of the South was certain in the very nature of the case, since fate could play no such dynastic stroke as saved Frederick the Great from ruin. The North was bound to carry on even if Lincoln had died his martyr's death before instead of after the "Cease fire!" in America. Indeed, even had the South asserted its independence, it is inconceivable that slavery could have permanently continued under the pressures that would still have applied. Confederate statesmen would perhaps have issued the order of liberation under the same kind of compulsitor as forced the hands of the Czar. With that rock of offence removed there would have been *rapprochement* resulting in reunion perhaps more assuredly than in the German Empire of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Chattel slavery was doomed beyond all hope, even if "Uncle Tom's Cabin" had never been written, and the South had

<sup>1</sup> Some think that the Confederate general Forrest was greater than Lee, though handicapped by his lack of education.

<sup>2</sup> The synthesis achieved by Bismarck is wrongly credited to him as the indispensable genius. Germany had been virtually unified long before in language and by economic conventions, and it was the potentates who were mainly responsible for the breakdown of the union in 1848.

prevailed in a triumph that could only have been illusory and transitory.

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But, though subliminal influences emancipated serfs and freed slaves, the humanitarian work went on with slower steps in the broader issue between employer and employed—Capital and Labour. Far into the nineteenth century abuses continued in the shape of child labour, long hours, low wages and the like, which even employers of to-day shudder at in retrospect. Here, however, though upper class humanitarianism was at work (even if landlords and merchants were trying to outwit each other), the notable thing is that popular assertiveness was also active, if not in absolutely novel fashion<sup>1</sup> yet with an intensity never known before, due undoubtedly to the general mechanical advance which stands for *education* to all if only indirectly, since even savages in the deepest jungles are now subject to the play of the infinitely subtle and pervasive influences radiating from the seats of civilisation. Such popular assertiveness however remains substantially an *industrial* portent, and the proletariat will thus vary in influence according to its predominance in the state. In Britain the industrials are tending more and more to make the pace because of increasing numbers and intensifying solidarity. In France, though there may be greater brightness and initiative in the industrial ranks than in Britain, that is more than counterbalanced by the far greater ruralism in the state, which can contrive to be reactionary without being either religious or royalist. In Germany before the war the masses were stultified by fancy franchises and by their own consent to imperialism, if “polarised” to a certain extent through the not unjustifiable fear of Russian militarism with its innumerable millions of peasant soldiers, who, in their dirt and ignorance, were hated as if they were so many rats advancing in search of offal. At the moment in Russia these same peasants are under the grip of a fierce Marxism in its first free effort to shape the destinies of society. To what extent the pure gospel is being applied and suits the

<sup>1</sup> It was really much in evidence in renascent Italy, as has already been noted, and was also active in the Netherlands, even while subject to their imperial suzerains.

interests or the moods of the mujiks, who are in such a great majority in Russia, it is difficult to say. It is more than likely that Léninism stands for the government of a small minority dependent upon the towns. If that be so, it is simply despotism with a difference, since the old *régime*, though it might pander nakedly to the superstitions of the people, had not the active assent of the crowd to its own economic spoliation. But the mujiks were helpless in the ratio of their massiveness and ignorance, with no power to rule the roast as do the French peasantry, by reason of their relative nimbleness in the whole circumstances of the case. So Leninism may last long enough, and even should it soon be displaced, the system which usurps it may still stand essentially for minority rule with less or more of pandering to the crowd, whose ultimate elevation will be all the more secure the more it can depend upon its own efforts. However that may be, proletarian assertiveness is a most marked feature of nineteenth-century life, if practically confined to Europe in the Old World, though with resemblances in varying degrees in Australasia and America. Labour indeed reached its maximum assertiveness in New Zealand and Australia, quite obviously because the distance from the great labour markets of Europe saved the proletariat from that "dilution" which was a bane in the United States and Canada lying so much nearer to the human overflow. Assertiveness, however, has increased in the New World as a result of the blockade of labour throughout the war, and continued by difficulties of passport and transport since. It is suggested that assertiveness, however we regard it, will increase rather than diminish in all states because of the power bound up in the total mechanical advance which absolutely respects no frontier and considers no class. We are involved in a universal Atlantic which cannot be mopped aside by any broom.

In one respect the nations of the nineteenth century were not one whit in advance of those nineteen centuries before the time of Christ—that is, in the discipline of their aggressive instinct as units apart from the relation of classes. The instinctive desire to expand, to subdue, and to monopolise went on more briskly than ever,

perhaps just because of the mechanical advance. And this aggressiveness was taken advantage of by one of the greatest adventurers that the world has ever seen—Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon has given rise to a literature perhaps even greater than that of the French Revolution which made him, and many even of the most pronounced democrats perpetually flit around the effulgence like benighted birds about a lighthouse, or moths around a lamp. Some even regard Napoleon as a “Liberal” whose strength might have set society on better democratic lines than ever had his actions not been mistaken for despotism as bad as the old, but more dangerous in the very measure of his military genius, and had he not been rudely overborne by the weight of numbers in the interests of tyranny. The present writer, after having read all the most authoritative pleas for Napoleon, has never been able to take this view. Napoleon was not quite in the line of Cæsar, in respect that he was not of pure “patrician” descent, but the psychological filiation is there all the same. He was without doubt a man of great military genius, and tended constantly to lean upon “the people” from whose ranks he had sprung. And (career being open to talent as never before) he exploited the fresh vivifications of the crowd still swayed by the old aggressive impulses. But, in dazzling the people with his victories, he “bull-dosed” them with his intrigues, robbed them of their Republican institutions, palmed off on them a tortuous parody of constitutionalism, and, himself a sceptic, sought to enchain the multitude by insincere compromises with the Pope—all essentially for his own glory and aggrandisement—and to found a dynasty in the unscrupulous style that differs in no way from the khans and sultans of Asia, the *condottieri* of Italy, or the presidential adventurers in Latin America to-day. Though an Italian himself, Bonaparte, a-tiptoe on the Alps, was the first to preach the naked doctrine of plunder in the rich plains of the peninsula, and, later, he made the country a footstool for the imperial throne. Victorious over Austria, he was not only dictatorial to her but almost defiant of the authority at home. Returning to France, he made his victories a foundation for his individual elevation, playing the

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mystery man with deliberate intent to that end. His affection for France was not so great as to blind him to the wider openings in the Orient where the greatest conquerors had ranged, "and where lived innumerable millions of men." These he viewed as a spoil to be won and not as a vast field to be improved by the slow application of social science, which alone can elevate the human race, however conquest may exalt generalissimos. So this occidental Tamerlane turned to the east in an expedition which defied the most elementary rules of safety, but which, through the "luck" which attaches to so many pure adventures, ended in his enthronement instead of his impeachment. When Nelson had destroyed his fleet he sneaked back to France in the hope that he would make capital out of the great military dangers then threatening the Republic. Before he arrived the country was saved by the talent of Massena, who took advantage once more of interior lines to rout the dispersed imperialists, among whom was the redoubtable Russian general Suvaroff, who returned from his terrible Alpine battles to die in disgrace. It was after defeat that Napoleon (or rather his lieutenant Desaix) won a second battle of Marengo, but it was only Moreau's much completer victory at Hohenlinden that brought Austria to her knees. But still the credit went mainly to the man of most ambition and least scruple, who next snuffed out Parliament, made himself First Consul, then perpetual Consul, and, finally, Emperor, and went forward to universal conquest and bloody defeat in ways that have been fashionable from the ages of stone to those of high explosives. Britain and the other opponents of Napoleon may be far from being guiltless in the desperate conflicts of the time, but, if there was one person more guilty than another, it was Napoleon Bonaparte, who found Republican France great and left her small, who might have been the greatest of benefactors because enjoying the most noble of chances, but who preferred the path of despotism at home and of conquest abroad on lines so fantastic as to show that, if he could win battles, he could do less to gain campaigns than the Ghenghis Khans who had preceded him. James Watt did more for the human race than Napoleon ever could have done, but, for one man who knows the details



of the great mechanic's life, there are hundreds who can prattle of Austerlitz and Waterloo. Yet there Napoleon lies in Paris with the dome of the Invalides casting down its golden rays upon his tomb, while there is a sort of solar effulgence in the ever-increasing literature that hallows his memory. If luck deserted him at Moscow and Waterloo it reappeared at St. Helena, since his exile has added a subtle exaltation to his fame in the measure in which it has debased the memory of Britain the banisher and Sir Hudson Lowe the jailer. Since all communities are aggressive by instinct and most men have a sneaking love of adventurous militarism (especially if it does not conscribe them), all this is probably as it should be, Bonapartists dreaming endlessly of the "might have been" in the career of their hero, and they of other nations hallowing a despot who was defeated, but whom they would have hooted had he been triumphant. In any case, whatever be at the root of the Napoleonic legend, there should be no doubt left in these pages as to the place Napoleon should hold in principle if not in history. He was temperamentally a tyrant and essentially a reactionary, and, if the world is to be made better, it will rather be by the extinction than the multiplication of his species. It will be well for humanity, then, if he remains "the last of our conquerors."

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It took Europe a good many years to recover from the exhaustion of the wars with Napoleon. His despotism, however "democratic" it may seem, induced terrible political reaction in BRITAIN, and worse still upon the Continent, where the Russian, Austrian, and Prussian potentates entered into an alliance in the name of "The most Holy and Indivisible Trinity" to preserve a political equilibrium which Providence for some reason had allowed to become unstable. But God disposes if man proposes, even in the persons of emperors. The wine of education could no longer be kept out of the blood of man, and, with the subtle concurrence of the *bourgeois*, things began to move again. The British franchise was extended, the "condition-of-the-people" question seriously attacked, and the Corn Laws were abolished, which ultimately resulted in the whole system of Protection going by

the board. Increased education had a good deal to do with this result, though only a minority were intellectually convinced by the doctrines of Adam Smith, and it was economic pressures which told mainly, along with "the rain that rained away the Corn Laws." It is because so many economic interests were inverted that Tariff Reform appeared again in our midst, and it is only because Free Trade has so many vested interests of its own that the new Protectionism has been defeated, but whether or not finally remains to be seen. In any event, if world peace is to be achieved, it can only be in terms of Free Trade as well as of diminished armaments, and any falling-away in Britain will only make more difficult the advance to concord.

In FRANCE the Bourbon dynasty failed to maintain itself. Louis XVIII<sup>1</sup> died in possession of the throne, but his brother Charles X, a stupid and hopeless reactionary, showed so much of the cloven hoof that the *bourgeoisie*, though acting very discreetly, had no difficulty in heaving him and his absurd pretensions right across the Channel. As for the Revolution of 1848, the reader should carefully consider if it was not a revolt of the workers *against* the *bourgeoisie* in a time of relative prosperity and progress when compared with the earlier insurrection against aristocratism. As the democratic programme was not thought out on really constructive lines, it soon got into the shallows and miseries which beset all governments that begin their career by simply having shorn through the bones, muscles, and sinews of the older organism. It was sought to "make work" for the clamorous multitude, with the inevitable result of parasitism, idleness, malingering, and ridiculous ineptitude—men digging holes the one day and filling them up the next, just to preserve a semblance of employment. The movement was more rhetorical than practical, and the alarmed *bourgeoisie*, subtly summoning to its side all the elements of discontent (aristocratic as well

<sup>1</sup> There never was any Louis XVII *de facto*, but the son of Louis XVI, who died in the Temple, was counted in as a king *de jure*, just as was the son of Napoleon I. "Legitimacy" is as punctilious in these things as is the Church in its Apostolic Succession.

as democratic) drowned out the more positive proletarians in a sea of blood in the streets of Paris. It was a terrible holocaust, in which France lost more men and generals than in any battles of the Empire. The Revolution of '48 showed that "the people," torn by dissensions and without thorough constructive plans, were bound to fail miserably against a *bourgeoisie* which knew its mind thoroughly and could manipulate the whole existing machinery of government solely in its own interest.<sup>1</sup> The proletariat, discomfited in its aims if not quite disillusioned in its hopes, turned to the work of everyday life then rapidly expanding on its mechanical side, and made France a perfect hive of industry, which Napoleon III (elevated by the power of the "Napoleonic legend" then in full play) warped and debased as effectually as his uncle had done. In the midst of the unrenounced imperialism of Europe Nationalism was surging up with a strength increasing in proportion to the educational influences at work, which no damping down could now sensibly affect. Napoleon, after the not very satisfactory finish of the Crimean War, affected to take up the cause of Italy against Austria, after Orsini's bomb had given him a rude reminder of what were considered to be obligations owing to Italy from France. Napoleon's generals were successful in the open field, but there was a pause in front of the dreadful "quadri-lateral," and a compromising peace resulted in which France gained Savoy for her "disinterested" help. Whether, in connection with the war of 1870, it was Napoleon, or his wife, or the court camarilla that was most to blame as regards the inward direction of affairs, we may never know. But, at any rate, "the people" were quite enthusiastic to begin with, until the dreadful succession of defeats brought the Empire to an end and set up a new republic, which, at last, was to assist in the destruction of the Teutonic empire that had sprung out

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<sup>1</sup> In the writer's opinion the Revolution of 1848 is ever so much more instructive in connection with the proletarian problem than the first French Revolution. The reader is advised to study attentively the literature of '48, less bulky if also less superficially attractive than that of the earlier convulsion. The outburst in Paris set up conflagrations in Europe which were all quelled, but the "Metternich system" was doomed despite the temporary reactions.

of the ruin of Napoleon's plans. Germany's greed and impolicy in 1871 have, therefore, an organic relation to the downfall of 1918. And, unless the nations can purge themselves of these vices, similar rises and falls will continue in politics until the crack of doom.

In speaking of NATIONALITY as we have just done, we have raised the last topic which need now be discussed in relation to the nineteenth century. It is often indicated that the principle of Nationality was a "discovery" of the nineteenth century. But surely it is a very short-range philosophy which can take that view. Communities are not only aggressive by instinct, but are in some respects more intensively conservative in custom the more "civilised" they are. For primitive peoples, though remaining ignorant and superstitious, have not the same means of fixation when trusting only to their memories. Hence languages are lost and customs are modified to a far greater degree among savages and barbarians than among *peuples policés*. Even if the savage be as *naturally* conservative as the more cultured races, his memory fails or deceives him, and his mind is as wax compared with the man who can refer constantly to the written code. Although most civilised nations have been illiterate as regards the body of their peoples until the other day (the Russians remaining so ages after the Chinese had an almost universal smattering of knowledge), there was always a comparatively enlightened nucleus who could preserve all the customs and traditions of the race. Hence such early examples of national resurgence as the Egyptians against the Hyksos, triumphant after centuries, and the Spaniards against the Moors. Even with such a nucleus, however, national life and institutions might be remoulded out of all recognition by the force of conquest. Thus while the Greeks, though overlaid completely by the Turks for five hundred years, maintained their religion and their language unchanged except by inward modification, Latin completely gave way in the west, even if its vocabulary profoundly modifies the Romance languages still. Basque too, in its mountain fastnesses, keeps up its reputation as the language of the Garden of Eden, though Celtic (its com-

petitor in that respect) has completely died out in Cornwall, and is only holding on by the skin of its teeth in Ireland. In any event printing has, from the first, tended to stabilise languages, which are the hall-mark of nationality, and the general spread of education in the nineteenth century has called back the spirit of the nations almost from the doors of the sepulchre. Thus the Czechs seem to have saved themselves almost at the last moment of grace, while Irishmen (who generally speak better English than the English themselves) are now desperately galvanising what lately seemed a corpse. In any event Nationality, backward looking to the fabled origin of the race, may now be considered to be indestructible and a first principle in politics. When Russia, Germany, and Austria with all the vast machinery at their command utterly failed to denationalise comparatively small communities, then the case seems hopeless on the coercive side. We can thus understand how Greece rose, phoenix-like, from her ashes early in the nineteenth century, helped by nations inimical to the Turk, and by scholars and enthusiasts like Byron fired with the thought of the ancient glory of the race, if terribly chilled by direct touch with the moderns, who still fail to come up to many expectations.<sup>1</sup> So Italy reattained full national status despite deep dialectical variations, and profound local prejudices due to petty dynastic traditions and papal pretensions. So also Serbia and Bulgaria awakened to new life under the not disinterested patronage of Russia, which, though evocative in the Balkans, was repressive in Poland and in Asia. In the nineteenth century, too, independence was attained to in some cases where it had not existed before. It has already been noticed how unscrupulous was the exploitation of the natives in Latin America, and what ruinous reactions were thereby set up in the character of the invaders as well as in the economics of the country of their origin. As has so often happened in the history of the world, the political and linguistic impression made by the incomers was far greater

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<sup>1</sup> About's *King of the Mountains* is an extremely humorous satire upon Greece of the earlier nineteenth century. Unlovely as Nationalism may often look in its insurgence it has yet to be put up with, since it cannot be put down, and there is always greater improvement under independence than under tyranny.

than the ethnic. There is far more native than Spanish or Portuguese blood in the inhabitants of South America and Mexico to-day, though in Brazil there is a very considerable negro infusion dating from the former trade in African slaves. Though Spain and Portugal had not the wisdom to rule their possessions well and profitably, they had maintained the material strength to dominate the subject peoples. But, as in the invasive period of Europe, it was merely a question of time till the new ethnic results should work out sufficient individuality to assert themselves in the general scheme of things. The brewing-out process took centuries, as in the European case. Though the "Creoles" had anything but love for the meddling home government and its emissaries (who most frequently were merely concerned to ensure their private fortunes), they were too few in numbers and scattered over too great an area to be able to head revolts for the sake of autonomy pure and simple. And the more backward natives were a hindrance rather than a help to real Home Rule. There was therefore in Spanish America none of the cohesion and concentration, incomplete as these were, which marked the successful revolt of the New England States. And turmoil, when it did ensue in the Spanish possessions, was royalist rather than revolutionary to begin with. It was Napoleon's dethronement of the senile Spanish dynasty which started the uproar. As the sound of a voice setting up atmospheric vibrations may start an avalanche at a distance, so the entry of the French into Madrid sent reverberations across the Atlantic which produced unexpected demonstrations in favour of the old dynasty and also of the Church. Evidently, however, these risings formed the germs of the subsequent revolts when state after state, having been roused to its feet, was led to independence under the "bold Bolivar" and other leaders. But the liberty gained after such considerable difficulty was not without its very disappointing results, as happens in all enthusiastic movements, and Bolivar himself retired in disgust from the scene, declaring that he had but ploughed the sea. Apparently the daring leader did not understand that matters cannot be kept permanently on a heroic plane. Things will tend towards the sordid in

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every despite. But it was a great thing that the really different nations should have achieved independence to work out their own destinies. General progress could only lie upon lines of autonomy and variation. Though the overflowing insurgence of the Spanish American republics for which they became notorious is a thing to be deplored, it was an experience which they were bound to pass through, and which every immature nation has suffered from in greater or less degree. But no community can ever be taught to stand on its own legs if held completely in tutelage, and so it was better that the country should be free rather than slavishly peaceful. And most of the republics have now settled down into a stability that will compare favourably with the European standard, especially at the present moment of turmoil.<sup>1</sup> In any event Nationality has come to stay, though it will have to purge itself of aggression if the world by it is to be made better. Meantime the self-determination of peoples has become a gospel, which may still be preached with hypocritical lips, but can only be flouted by suzerains at their peril, as the results of the world war have shown. Quite early in the struggle Russia promised Home Rule to Poland, not because the bureaucracy desired it, but because the concession could no longer be withheld. Austria (which was benign to some of its subjects for the sake of their continued acquiescence in the subjection of others) succumbed at long length to the political instability which her tyranny had long ago induced—the heave of the world war at last throwing over the giant rocking-stone with a confusion and a destruction which will not be sorted out for years to come. In our own case Ireland remains the Achilles heel of the British Empire, the old political embarrassments due to it in America and

<sup>1</sup> Mexico has been extremely turbulent since the downfall of Diaz, whose despotism, while favouring the commercial development of the state, militated against its political ripening. Mexico's case is on all fours with the disturbances in Russia and Germany, with subtle foreign influences fomenting the commotions in the interest of contending capitalists intent upon "concessions." The curse of Mexico is that it has so much wealth in small or easily transported bulk—its minerals and its oils. If it were mainly agricultural, like the Argentine, there might be fewer ructions, although the country of the great plains in the south must always be more coherent than mountainous Mexico, just because of the physical diversity of the latter.

Australasia remaining acute, while in Ireland itself there is a resurgence such as never was known in the terribly chequered past. The rebellion may be overcome, but it can only be so temporarily, since it is more likely that in some fashion or another agreement will be come to by practically full admission of the fact of Nationality if not of all the constitutional consequences that are at present being claimed.<sup>1</sup> Even Japan will find that her late inhuman attempt to denationalise Korea for the "safety" of her empire can succeed only by practical destruction of the race, perhaps not a physical impossibility, but a result which would justify Japan being drummed out of the comity of nations. Happily the Koreans, like the Armenians, will almost assuredly survive to brighter days in store for them, in which they may purge themselves of vices under the same peaceful conditions which suzerains require as much as subjects. If the Koreans are hateful to the Japanese, the Japanese are equally hateful to the western Americans. If the Japanese political philosophy were sound it would justify a crusade of extinction by the Republic against the Chrysanthemum Kingdom. Happily, if the sentiment still survives in the States that the only good Indian is a dead Indian, things are never likely to come to the pass that the Japanese are only to be considered tolerable in their coffins. But intolerance has really been the gait of nations since history began, staining with blood every page in the book of the past, if, happily, there will be more white sheets in the records of the future.

### THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

When the twentieth century began it is estimated that the earth had a total population of over one thousand five hundred millions, while population was increasing in almost every country despite famines in some quarters and wars in others. The tumults discoursed of throughout the foregoing pages had left the world-ridges of men

<sup>1</sup> These words were written in the autumn of 1920. The prophecy which they contain has come true. Though the forecast related to a case which may seem to some subsidiary it is yet symbolical of the insuppressible principles at work in the world of politics to-day.



practically unaltered. The black races still centre in Africa, and they are perhaps the most prolific of human stocks—their fecundity being indeed a great problem in the old slave areas of America. The brown races still centre in India, where population may have become denser than ever in the past through the establishment of the British peace, though the standard of life may have diminished rather than increased under the sheer pressure of numbers. Among the yellow peoples the Japanese, in consequence of their island location allowing a penetration of ideas not possible on the continent, gave the lie to the dogma of the unprogressiveness of the Asiatic, if the advance were too much on mechanical-military lines. But China also was stirring in her sleep, and perhaps needless apprehensions began to be aroused regarding the “yellow peril.” In point of fact, although the yellow men almost equal the white in numbers, it was the latter who were continuing to press in upon the yellow stocks, and not the other way about. And this “white peril” is by no means removed yet, at least so far as the Chinese are concerned. For the point now is that the white races, because of their locations in Europe and America, are likely to keep ahead in numbers and science, though there is no likelihood of any ethnic displacement taking place on any considerable scale—even the Red Indians being likely to keep their footing now, at least in South America. Despite, however, the stability notable regarding the world-ridges of men, there were great inequalities remaining as to the amount of culture attained to and the political status acquired by the peoples. Much savagery persisted in Africa and the great East Indian Islands as a result of climatic conditions, which are so difficult to transcend. These areas, too, were all parcelled out among the various European powers, who could more readily exploit the natives commercially than elevate them spiritually, as the various “rubber scandals” indicated. The dominions of savagery were, however, shrinking under the impact of civilisation, however selfish it might be at points. And at the beginning of the twentieth century “Civilisation” included a greater number of human beings than ever in the past. But, as already indicated, the political status

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of many nations might remain very low. India and its circumjacent cultures were political ciphers under European direction, while China, the oldest independent polity in the world, was being tormented like an animal in the bull-ring. Japan, indeed, was the only really independent country in Asia, since Russia was master in the old nomadic lairs and was partner with Britain in a joint adventure in Persia. In Europe, moreover, most of the greater Powers exercised suzerainty against many smaller peoples straining at the leash under the national promptings inspired as indicated in the last section. Only America was free from the political overlappings referred to. The political equilibrium, therefore, in the old world was of a very unstable character, due not only to the social problem within each state and nationalist unrest at many points, but also to the jealousies regarding the European commitments in Africa and Asia. Since Russia, France, and Britain, along with inconspicuous Holland, held a practical monopoly of the extra-European possessions it was too much to expect that later comers upon the political stage would not covet what were looked upon as essential markets and sources of power ministering to the grandeur of the sovereign state. So Japan went to war with Russia over "encroachments" in the Amur region, and a Mongolian "sphere of influence" took the place of a Slavonic, with no benefit either to suzerains or to subjects that is traceable. And the curious thing is that these deadly struggles in Manchuria were preceded by one of the most trumpeted (if not really sincere) efforts to diminish armaments and abate the horrors of warfare ever manifested. It was headed, too, by a Czardom destined to flout its own precepts to the utmost. The truth is that, though the wastefulness of war and its utility had been recognised as never before in the history of the world, there was no nation quite free from sectional avarice or aggressiveness, or indisposed to aggrandise itself if the opportunity offered. Storm centres therefore tended to form wherever the contradictory interests clashed for the moment—in China, in Persia, in Morocco, and the Balkans. And armaments increased rather than diminished, there being a special concentration on submarines and aircraft meant to strike

with all the stealth and force possible. After many awkward corners had been turned the different alliances and *ententes* (formed not so much to avoid war as to get the best of a struggle when it eventuated) found themselves in deadly confrontation in 1914. The immediate result was the waging of the greatest war in the history of the world. The Germans have formally pleaded guilty as the aggressors in that connection, but under circumstances which certainly do not exclude the plea of *force majeure* later on. Recent revelations, however, have shown that the Russian bureaucracy was far from blameless as regards its motives and the time and method of their expression. The truth is that no nation had purged itself of the aggressiveness that is instinctive to humanity and was concerned only for the supreme interests of civilisation, and had not in mind the pettier national concerns at stake. But, in a universally defective world, there may be *degrees of culpability* which may result virtually in a "decree of absolutor" in favour of the less aggressive agents in the conflict. In any case it is suggested that that is the line which the impartial student of history should follow regarding an event which not only dwarfs everything else in our era but also must continue to affect the life of the world for generations, as the eruption of Krakatoa coloured our sunsets for years. And, just as we may be somewhat at a loss as to the *political* origins of the war as distinct from the general belligerent feelings *conditioning* it, so we are also at a loss as to the factors that yielded defeat on the one side and victory on the other. The militarists in Germany blame the people, and the people the military; while, on the other side, Belgians, Serbians, French, Italians, British, and Americans are severally disposed to take the bulk of the credit to themselves, with particular honour to this or that statesman or mechanical device as being "decisive" in the struggle. It all goes to show what a dreadfully complicated thing historical causation is. Napoleon Bonaparte himself to his dying day never was able to make up his mind whether it was the rain, the stiffness of the British resistance, or the intervention of the Prussians which lost him the battle of Waterloo. In the writer's opinion the world war was lost to the

"Teuto-Turanians" because they had neither the material nor the spiritual resources of the Allies. Greater numbers, more material, and the science of the whole world outside Central Europe were bound in the long run to make their impression with a *liberationist* feeling on the allied side which did not exist in the enemy's camp, however hypocritical and selfish some at least of the Allies may have been.<sup>1</sup> Even, therefore, if the Germans had constructed their famous "corridor" from the Baltic to the Red Sea and Persian Gulf it probably could not have made them finally victorious, although a second war or a series of wars might have been required to break down what would have been the greatest military barricade ever erected in history. In any event the war was won for the Allies, and every nation is now concerned in clearing up the mess it has made within and without the various domains. As might have been expected, the "spoils problem" has been as troublesome as in the less idealist past, since the principles of self-determination have not been honestly applied in the various treaties that have been signed only to be violated at the first opportunity. The writer can only insist that Nationalism, however selfish and inconsiderate it may prove when given its chance, will tend to prevail against every artificial restriction limiting its freedom. Only wholesale massacre, indeed, of the recalcitrants will ever solve such a problem nowadays, and the expedient may be attempted in some quarters even yet despite the humanitarianism of the time. For the jealousies that remain may make the great Powers helpless or indifferent regarding crimes which would be impossible under a show of union. In any event time is on the side of the Nationalists now, even if their triumphs should ultimately prove largely illusory, though they may lead on to new and better co-operations when the old vices of suzerainty and subjection have been forever transcended. As regards the *economic* sequelæ of the world war all that the writer can say is this. Holding as he does that Trade is a mutually fructifying

<sup>1</sup> Russia, for instance. Perhaps the Russian mujik was one of the least aggressive of men. But his government was utterly imperialistic. So while events forced the bureaucracy to promise liberty to Poland, the official desire at the same time was to get possession of Constantinople with a view to world-power, which was alleged to be the "inevitable" destiny of the people.

thing, functioning perfectly only under conditions of peaceful exchange, he was led to believe that Indemnities were a blessing neither to victors nor to vanquished, and might injure the creditor country more perhaps than they handicapped the debtor nation. Such seemed to be the case when Rome laid Carthage under tribute, and, much more apparently, when Germany exacted a fine from France which is a mere bagatelle compared with the imposition upon Germany now. Fifty years ago the spectacle was seen of the French paying off their debt being highly prosperous, and Germany in the act of receiving it being greatly depressed. This was evidently a result of the *non-mutuality* of the transaction. In the very measure in which the French had to produce they were bound to be prosperous, whereas German industry was bound to be depressed to the very extent there was satisfaction of a demand by the imports which called for no exports to work out the natural equation. Founding on these principles, the writer predicted in the public press,<sup>1</sup> immediately the Versailles Treaty was signed, that the result would be the worst period of unemployment that the more industrial countries ever endured. The depression came about only too soon, and there is no doubt that Indemnities are playing a considerable part as regards the unemployment which still persists in the beginning of 1923 as these lines are being revised.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The *Glasgow Herald* of 1919 and subsequent years. The writer is very reluctant to appear in the insufferable rôle of a true prophet, but since he is concerned first and last with *principles* whose value lies in their *predictive* as well as retrospective power, he may be forgiven this incidental reference to a test upon an issue of very grave import still.

<sup>2</sup> It may be well to note that the writer considers Indemnities as only aggravating a recurrent problem in industrial society. Unemployment seems to come in cycles, the reasons for which remain obscure. The writer, however, is inclined to believe that the evil is not quite beyond discipline. He is one of the growing school which believes that "saving" beyond the point where "capital" is required to carry on the work of production is bad for the state as a whole, if beneficial to certain individuals. In other words, the evil is not so much one of "over-production" as "under-consumption." If, therefore, a development of sickness benefit and of old age pensions could prevent the masses from laying past for a rainy day which so many fear, and "congestion of capital" could be avoided in the financial ranks, trade might be kept at a permanently high level, especially if the products demanded involved an increasing degree of skill instead of facile multiplication by machinery. On this interesting subject the reader should consult the works of Hobson, Robertson, Kitson, and others.

Great as is the financial problem confronting each country the writer cannot believe that the energy which went to the creation of the National Debts cannot be used to wipe them out almost as quickly as they were created if only the right means were applied. But the method of Indemnities is a hindrance rather than a help, since it transgresses the *mutually productive law*, by means of which alone the world can work and prosper in freedom and not in a virtual slavery worse than anything in the past as offending against a humanitarianism which should not be explicitly avowed if it is not to be honestly applied. But, as the case stands, one is preaching now to the converted (at least in Britain and America) on a point involving the most formidable issue of the hour. Unless the contingency is carefully handled it is possible that, in a world so swayed still by vested interests playing upon still untamed aggressiveness in the mass, "the war that was to end war" may turn former friends into enemies, and breed future wars of a more terrible type than the one just ended. From all which may the good Lord deliver us !

### THE FUTURE IN THE LIGHT OF THE PAST

Forecasting remains a dangerous thing, even if the prophets are not stoned as of old. But the writer, having dredged so deeply into the past, is tempted to round off his study by indicating how far his haul of principles seems to carry into the future upon positive as well as negative lines.

*Science.*—The tool-using faculty of man, which is still limited among some savages to the rude manipulation of sticks and stones, can have no conceivable bounds set to its development. If we have not quite "captured" the air to-day with the same general certainty as distinguishes mechanical motion on land and sea, there is no saying what may happen even within a single generation. Wireless telephony may not only link up the whole earth, but even perhaps hitch us on to Mars, if there are really people there and a common alphabet can be found, which seems very doubtful. In any event the twentieth century is likely to excel even the "wonderful" century

that preceded it in mere mechanics, and, it is to be hoped, in moral and social progress.

*The Ethnic Future.*—It is not in the least likely, however, that there will be any great ethnic redistribution in the future. The “world-ridges” are likely to remain as they have been since time immemorial, though there may continue to be wavering on the boundary lines, and smaller communities may become completely engulfed as did the native Tasmanians in the last century. Since all the wars of history have not hindered the expansion of the greater stocks in their particular habitats, it is safe to say that increases of population will take place faster than ever despite broils however intense, since the mechanism of defence is likely to retain its superiority against any attack, however “scientific,” whose objective would be the complete obliteration of communities, nations, and peoples. There is no more chance of Africa becoming white than of Europe becoming yellow through the wholesale ethnic greed that forms a nightmare for so many minds obsessed with the “yellow peril.” But there *is* a chance that the yellow races may assert themselves in some quarters where saturation point has not been reached—in Australia especially. Whether that would be a good thing or a bad thing is not now in question, but it is simply suggested as a *possibility* of the future under sheer secular pressures as distinct from military conquests, which, of course, are not to be considered as quite out of the reckoning. It is more likely that the climatic impediments to the advance of population and culture discussed at length herein may largely be overcome, but, in all probability, the inured populations, wherever they exist, in however scanty proportions, are most likely to benefit by a scientific cleansing-up of existing obstacles. These regions, however, may become more mottled than the old ridges, “which will continue to confront each other steadfastly like the great mountains of Thibet.”

*Nationalism and Militarism.*—Enough has already been said as to the essential antiquity of Nationalism in history, and the reason for its more marked activity in modern times. However dubious the basis of Nationality may be in any particular case, and however overlapping and contradictory the influences composing it may be—

as in the Balkans, in Poland, and even Ireland—it is probable that it must remain a political “categorical imperative” for a long time to come. In so far as Nationality stands for the friction of ideas and systems that stop short of physical violence, it is probably, on the whole, a creative force in civilisation; but there is no disguising the fact that it also stands at times for naked malignity, and for such narrowness of ideas and feeling as to be a counteractive of progress and a real feeder of that warfare which roots so deeply in our human nature as has been indicated. Only when the instinctive and peculiar aggressiveness of man has been transcended will Nationalism transmute into something higher and nobler, not necessarily ending in a universal sloppiness, but in a virility that may continue through emulations that will never fail for lack of spontaneous differences in idea and outlook, but which may be better directed in the future than in the past. Cannibalism, slavery, serfdom, and minor social diseases have been transcended in history through drift rather than design. Militarism may go the way of these evils, which were also once considered “inevitable” in our life. It should help to the reasoned attainment of such an end to insist upon a moral which is now “gross, open, palpable as a mountain”—namely, that the constructive forces of life have been constantly gaining upon the destructive, of which war is the only wilful type and by no means the most effective, since the influenza of 1919 destroyed more lives in five months than did the war in five years. Microbes may continue to haunt the blood of man, but there is no reason why war should continue as a “bacillus of the brain” any more than cannibalism, which was evicted by intelligence, as may be this last “microbe of the mind.” There is no reason in the world why the “surplus energy” from which warfare may arise should not find all the expression which it needs in communal activities of every kind, in art, in literature, in science, in commerce, in athletics, in the thousand and one emulations that stop short of the bloody and finally futile arbitrament of war. Militarism then will cease, but manhood will remain.

*The Social Question.*—The millennium indicated will, however, not be reached without profound developments



in the social as well as in the international field. The instincts of private property and of caste, which lean heavily against each other, have as profound a psychological root almost as war, if, indeed, we are not dealing with one primal instinct working through different channels in our nature. In any event, private property is likely long to remain as a pivotal human institution, sustaining economic inequality and moulding caste in so far as that does not arise out of sheer disdain, as is still the case in all ranks of society. That means that Parliamentarianism will continue, with the *bourgeoisie* as the ruling force wherever it is not supplied or supplemented by hard-fisted peasants, as is likely to be the case to a greater extent than ever in the past, since the *régime* of small holdings may arise in Russia, Rumania, and Hungary just as in France. But proletarian assertiveness will sooner or later challenge *bourgeois* authority in the more advanced industrial countries, but, perhaps, with no chance of instituting anything like "Communism" in the near future. To-day that idea is utterly repellent to the bulk of people, because it suggests, not only the notion of community in *persons* as well as in property, but also because it involves regimentation in intense degree. Socialism, therefore, will never come about until men in the mass have lived down their acquisitive faculty and they have become either lamb-like like the ancient Peruvians or it is discovered that personal liberty can be reconciled with economic equality in a fashion that has never yet been approached in the history of the world. Apart, however, from radical reform in property rights there may be profound modifications of the Parliamentary system in the direction of making elected assemblies more fully representative than they are at the present day by grants of Home Rule, not only to nations but also to provinces, counties and cities, insuring a greater communism of *control* as distinct from that of possession. In this respect the Russian Soviets may point the way to better things even in their very failure to rise to the occasion, as we may later see when the revolutionary clouds have rolled away. Even to the many believers in the "sacredness" of private property as an institution, the prospect is not an inviting one of the world divided

up permanently into categories of Capital and Labour, with wealth and all its accomplishments as but an iridescence upon the surface of society, popular well-being remaining low generally and perhaps, in some cases, falling through the blind increase of population which the advance of science and the cessation of war might induce in the absence of a deliberate control of numbers. The world would not be bettered by reaching saturation point on Chinese lines, commendable as the comparative pacifism of that great state may be. There seems to be no "law" that the heightening of the standard of comfort would keep population automatically checked at a point where increase would be dangerous to the ideal standard of comfort. Thus even a Socialist state might require to regulate its numbers to preserve itself from malnutrition. In any event, and whatever may be the changes and chances ahead, real increment can only come with comparative slowness if there is any validity in the teaching of the past, because, the life of all being based upon institutions however defective, it cannot but be seriously disturbed by violence however well intentioned as regards the mass of the people to be benefited. But, though *festina lente* may be the moral here, it has too often been construed as inhibiting any movement at all. It is thus blind reactionaries who have been the progenitors of purblind revolutionaries.

*Trade and Commerce.*—If Trade is a mutually fructifying thing and Protection at best but a sectional benefit, then Freedom of Trade would be a corollary, if not a condition-precedent, of a peaceful world. But, though there has been a universal panting after peace however insincerely in some quarters, the world war has rather given a set-back to Free Trade in the British case by resort to expedients which many hope will not be transitory. But since every device to "preserve" trade artificially and to "capture" it with equal art is foredoomed to failure by the very constitution of things, then it may be inferred that the very growth in Trade which is certain to follow in the future, despite temporary depressions, will continue to surge over any weirs and barriers erected, and tend to level everything out to the greatest good of the greatest number.

*Religion.*—The amount of practical irreligion in the world has always been very considerable, despite the existence of the most authoritative creeds. The advance of science has created a fund of convinced scepticism alongside this unbelief, and such secularism is likely to grow in the future. But there is no chance of the world ever becoming "Atheist" to the full extent, so mysterious must the forces surrounding us remain, and so strong will be the prompting to resort to ritual and dogma, "as footholds however arbitrary in the slippery realms of mind." Creeds, therefore, stand in no danger of supersession even if they lose hold on the state, since their grip on man's mind is deeper than any temporal link can reach. It is likely, however, that "fancy religions" will keep bobbing up round the margins of all the greater creeds, to flourish for a time and give place to others, as we see taking place so actively in America, whose "materialism" seems to foster religiosity rather than discourage it.

*Art and Literature.*—Art probably roots in that "surplus energy" of which we have already spoken, being primarily an expression of the *joie de vivre*. It is, however, strictly conditioned by the circumstances of the artists. The primitive folk delighted in the fashioning of their tools and weapons, and painting their caves and probably their persons, and in dancing—cadenced speech perhaps accompanying the rhythm of the bodies swaying round the log-fires of long ago. There is no people however "low" that has not its primitive art, and so the ballad is an almost universal characteristic rising up into the epic while communities may still be little above the "barbarian," as in the "Iliad," the "Nibelungenlied," the "Kalevala," and the "Popul-Vuh." Settled life, however, with its extreme political pressures put a damper on every form of art which had "liberty" as its inspirer, despotisms thus running invariably to the grandiose rather than to the graceful, as has been already noted, with consummate art only appearing in the midst of relative religious and political freedom. Since there is likely to be less and less restriction by government upon those lines in the future, Art and Literature are likely to blossom with only such limitations as may be imposed

by public taste rather than the dead hand of the law. But the age of the "heroic" in poetry is perhaps gone forever, since there can be no such "renascence of wonder" as made possible the creation and popular appreciation of these essentially naïf works "of long breath." Poetry, however, may still be didactic to some extent, but it is likely to be rather lyrical and "occasional," and will remain a complete drug in the market for all but a few very fortunate singers. Masterpieces will probably accrue in greater numbers in prose than in poetry, since the medium here does not fatigue the spirit by that over-exaltation which is *ineluctable* in the other case. There is a danger, however, that themes may ultimately lack in fiction, since "all the love stories have been told and all possible detective plots planned." The doom of repetition, however, while it may militate against masterpieces asserting themselves alongside those of the past, will not in the least prevent production, but will only make it of a more and more ephemeral nature. And indeed there is no room in the world for an unlimited supply of statues, paintings, poems, romances, novels, histories, and sermons. The leisure of every generation is strictly limited, and, if works of art intrinsically deserving of immortality were being produced by thousands every day, they would still have to fall by the wayside, because there could be no room for them in the inn of human hospitality. The ephemeral in Art is therefore a necessity of the case, and perhaps there is too much sneering at attention to things of the present and neglect of the masterpieces of the past. People are naturally most interested in the life of the time and the things of the moment, and can only be blamed if their interest in the present completely forecloses their vision as regards the horizons of the past and speculations as to the future. For there can be a balance between the appreciation of both the ephemeral and the immortal in Art; and the populations of the future, in the more leisured life that is likely to accrue by general consent, may have chances of satisfying mass aspirations in fuller degree and in less gross form than ever in "the vast, illiterate past."

## RECAPITULATION

It may be as well to resume as briefly as possible the main points submitted in the foregoing pages, so as to have a clearer bird's-eye view of the argument as a whole.

1. We do not know where or when man originated, but it is believed to be somewhere in the tropics perhaps hundreds of thousands of years ago.

2. In the last analysis what distinguishes man from the brute is his superior brain, acquired we know not how. The most *radical* expression of this brain power, however, lies in the faculty of using tools—*i.e.* the capacity to manipulate one part of matter not organically connected with the body to modify other matter indefinitely.

3. This capacity may have earliest manifested itself in the use of STICKS, but STONES came into general use, rudely fashioned to begin with, but becoming very shapely and highly polished among some peoples—the “new stone age,” which affected only sections, covering a much shorter period of time, it is believed, than the “old stone age,” which was practically a universal fact.

4. Quite late in the life of man, it is thought, the MALLEABILITY OF THE METALS was discovered. Bronze, which is an alloy, first came into general use. It was succeeded by iron, whose refinements (along with the use of some less widely diffused metals) form the basis of our modern civilisation.

5. It is probable that there may have been considerable variation in the human stocks when the tool-using art was attained to, in virtue of which man probably spread over the whole earth and became the “universal species,” getting further modified by the nature of the environments settled into by the blocks of black, brown, yellow, white, and red stocks, forming “world-ridges” which have remained practically permanent, with greater modification in the “red” branch by overflowing of whites into spaces kept relatively untenanted because of the nomadism of the natives.

6. So far from man being more sociable than the bulk of animal species he is less so, in respect that he is the

only created creature systematically combining his numbers to destroy and subject other sections of his fellow-men.

7. This singularity, reinforced by the conservatism inherent in masses of men despite the progressiveness of individuals, accounts for the course history has taken down to modern times.

8. If man's diet may once have been confined to fruits and nuts, he is seen to be carnivorous in the earliest traceable stages of his earthly existence. HUNTING, therefore, was probably once the universal *métier*, which, however, was only consistent with a very thinly populated earth—no more than ten millions perhaps altogether.

9. It was discovered, however, that animals could be domesticated, partially as well as completely, and this, as better stocking the human larder, added perhaps considerably to the population without, however, softening in any way the mentality of man. But PASTORALISM never extended to the new world until after the arrival of the whites, there being few or no domesticable animals in America.

10. The artistry of man did not stop short with the manipulation of inorganic matter and the care of animals, but extended itself to the life of plants. It was discovered that PRUNING, GRAFTING, and SOWING could add immeasurably to diet, and TILLAGE was therefore probably resorted to wherever the soils were suitable.

11. These soils, however, were subject to two different kinds of inhibition—one of nature and one of man. In the tropics great heat and great moisture combined, in the degree in which they nourished plants, discouraged human effort, making man practically content with the spontaneous yield of the soil, while even to-day man's highest mechanical skill cannot overcome the lassitude in which he is lapped in the moist tropics.

12. In the *temperate* regions of the earth, where there was stimulation rather than damping down of human energy, it was *human malignity* which prevented the exploitation of the soil, the hunters and shepherds squelching every attempt at cultivating the greater plains of the earth, which were so naturally fertile that they have never required manuring.

13. It thus happened that the practical botanists of the earlier earth had to flee from the face of the irreconcilable butchers into desert asylums for the prosecution of their art, which they were only able to pursue in full measure by wholesale irrigation expedients on the hill-sides of Mexico and Peru and the river-valleys of Egypt and Mesopotamia. These were redeemed by **STONE TOOLS ALONE**—a circumstance which should increase our respect for these infinitely patient artists who founded **CIVILISATION** which has tillage as its requisite base.

14. There is no doubt at all that Civilisation, as so defined, originated in Egypt and Mesopotamia in the old world, and in Mexico and Peru in the new, though we have no idea how long the American experiment may have lingered behind the others, which have an *inferable* history of some ten thousand years at least.

15. How culture became stabilised outside the deserts of the Old World we do not know, but it is possible that native efforts towards tillage were powerfully backed by stimuli radiating out from the earliest centres of Civilisation. In any event India and China attained also to a tillage culture based upon *periodic rains*, and giving rise to a greater productivity as covering larger areas than in the strictly limited river-valleys.

16. Though the roots of Chinese and Indian Civilisations are sunk in the irremovable subsoil of tradition, it is common ground that they do not strike so deeply into time as the cultures of Egypt and Mesopotamia. In the case of Europe the origins are more obvious and the derivations clearer—the Near Eastern cultures inspired those of the Mediterranean, which, however, refined upon them infinitely, since Europe, though backward because of the inhibitions due mainly to the human malignities commented on, being the most *oceanic* of continents with highly varied contours and great natural riches, could elaborate Civilisation with a versatility unknown in other quarters.

17. History thus, in its broadest features, stands for the slow supersession of Nomadism, whose retaliation however in the old world within the period of written records, was frequently fierce and destructive—in the assaults of Scythians, Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Mongols,

Tatars, and the like, whose invasiveness however requires no theory of drought, since it can be more easily accounted for by the instinctive aggressiveness of groups common alike to barbarian and civilised, with the advantage however not definitely on the latter side until the age of gunpowder, which rung the knell of Nomadism for the reasons elaborated in the text. So that the *Passing of Nomadism* is one of the great landmarks of history—perhaps indeed the greatest so far.

18. Reasons were given for the political helplessness of the *Highlander in History*, compared with the nomad. Despite his predatoriness, it was suggested that the mountaineer was not so much a degrading factor in civilisation as a clarifier of culture.

19. The sea has also been an active progressive force in Civilisation, despite the piracy that was immanent in the maritime vocation until modern times.

20. Turning from the consideration of external influences to the more intimate structure of society, it was pointed out that woman had been subject to man in all societies, if less so in savage and barbarian than in the majority of Civilisations still.

21. It was indicated why Slavery was inconsistent with the hunter's life and but moderately compatible with the pastoral system; but it deepened along with tillage, was practically transcended in the more ancient civilisations, yet was very prevalent in classical Greece and Rome, debasing these cultures probably to a very considerable extent. Slavery continued so long as it was "economic," the bondage of negroes in America being about the worst on record.

22. Slavery merged into Serfdom in Europe, and Serfdom gradually lapsed from our life through the operation of causes not easily discernible, but were probably partly economic and partly humanitarian in their character.

23. There is a strong tendency to "specialisation of function" in nature which may be at the root of the system of CASTE, so pronounced a feature of human society. In primitive communities, however, only the *elders* may be marked off as having any distinct power, political and religious authority being at first confounded,



but evolving later into distinct categories of Church and State, quarrelsome between themselves but united against any challenge from below.

24. The stability imposed by tillage, necessarily making the agriculturists "soft" *vis-à-vis* the nomads (whose life conserved a great amount of rude equality), made the tillers soft also face to face with the more aggressive individuals and sections within their own communities. Under the barbaric menace without there was a natural tendency towards political despotism within, as a result of the need of all sections to combine against a common danger. In consequence also of the natural tendency of wealth to condense into a very few hands, gross economic inequality (apart from slavery) supervened in civilised communities which, in its deepest drudgery and want, may have signified much less well-being than among the barbarians themselves, although we have no metewand of "happiness" to work out our social comparisons.

25. But, however "steep" and massive poverty might be in any civilised community, it was always virtually acquiesced in by the mass, not simply through the force of custom, but also because "the people" as importing many wills against few, were thereby comparatively unstable in their elements. They were further weakened by the very avariciousness reprobated in the upper ranks, and by an indulgence in feuds on grounds of difference of totems, dialects, religions, rites, shibboleths of all sorts, or sheer separation in space, setting up a dualism of hamlets, towns, cities, provinces, kingdoms, and empires which flew at each other's throats through covetousness of wealth or for the naked desire to dominate apart from the immediate economic aggrandisement. That seldom or never followed because of the violent disruption of the productive processes which really involve less destructive competition than import mutual fructification if carried on in peace.

26. The belligerencies of civilised peoples however, despite the waste and stultification which they caused, were harmless compared with the nomadic interventions, since the instinct was still to *construct* if by the infiltration of new influences less refined perhaps than the native ones, but still creative compared with the stark violence of the nomads. Thus, though the Romans destroyed

Corinth and Carthage, they not only rebuilt these cities (if in no clearly repentant mood), but also erected many new cities, and encouraged trade and art, although upon increasingly despotic lines which marred the finish of the Civilisation from the idealist point of view.

27. For, other things being equal, the more political and intellectual "liberty" a community can manifest, the more "civilised" must we vote it by the only standard we can apply. Egypt, India, Mesopotamia, and China are thus heavy featured Civilisations in consequence of the general conditions of their existence, which did not allow of the highest forms of artistic inspiration such as supervened in Greece, not as a result of miraculous brain-waves there, but mainly because the friction of local cultures in a highly diversified country laid hold of a perfect opportunity in time, and polished up ideas that had been haunting the mind of man since his first speculative days. Greece lapsed back into silence, but Persia became vocal because of the inspiration due to special circumstances of which she had become the centre, just as happened in Italy (comparatively inartistic in Roman times) whose renaissance produced work which will compare in finish with the highest forms of classical Greek art. If Civilisation is worth while having on these lines, the aim should be to allow the "liberty" that is required to let the artistic influences embedded in the human brain have the free course which they crave.

28. As against the political despotism which prevailed in most countries throughout history, a remarkable variant is the "Republicanism" which cropped out in Asia Minor, Greece, and other parts of Europe, due, it was suggested, to the relative preponderance of MERCANTILISM in the communities, with art greatly enhanced by the rulers, if with a keener exploitation of the people than under the despotisms.

29. FEUDALISM is also a polity which makes a "cross-section in the political anatomy." As against the conventional view that it was European and a creature of Roman law and Germanic custom, it was argued that it was a condition that may arise anywhere on the road between semi-nomadism and tillage despotism, and has thus manifested itself "from China to Peru."

30. In a world whose tool-using faculty had constantly tended to develop however slowly, it was inevitable that political power, which depends upon a combination of geographic, economic, and psychological factors, should change its centres according not only to transitory pressures, but also to the general widening of influences. Thus Egypt, imperialistic for ages, had to succumb inevitably to greater antagonisms similarly inspired, however blindly. So Assyria forged to the front, but had to give place to Persia much better placed geographically, which first menaced Greece, then bowed the knee to her, then, when revived, competed on practically equal terms with Rome, which had particular sources of strength quite traceable in her history—these things following a “law” which it was sought to elucidate; a residual truth being that, in the past, no nation or empire ever succumbed *by its own vices*, but was always overborne by barbarians or less civilised outsiders. Since the supersession of barbarism it has been mainly a case of the European nations struggling for supremacy within, and for suzerainty in other continents which they dominate in virtue of their greater initiative and material resources—America and Japan being their only concurrents in these world politics, whose elements are all agog still as a result of the Great War.

31. Just as gunpowder stood for a final victory against Nomadism so the art of PRINTING came in both as an evocative and stabilising force in connection with NATIONALITY, which is yet an old portent, though in the past some communities completely foundered in alien surroundings. But that risk has now been reduced to a minimum, and Nationalism may now be considered an indestructible thing, but, if the world is to be bettered, it must cease to be aggressive—the variform cultures being preserved as stimulants of each other instead of as destroyers.

## A CONDENSED CHRONOLOGY

Just as we have summarised the arguments submitted in the foregoing pages, it may be well also to condense the chronology, so that the reader may have a better grasp of the time-element in the case.

- { *The Stone Ages*.—We do not know when man began to use tools, but the various "ages" are believed to have covered many thousands of years.
- B.C. { Civilisation in *Egypt* and *Mesopotamia* in various agricultural forms, signifying perhaps many centuries of earlier activity.
- 6000 { to *Egypt*.—King Menes unifies country, and founds "First Dynasty," which had seven Kings altogether. Second Dynasty (three Kings).
- 5000 { *Mesopotamia*.—Country invaded by "Semites," who are the Babylonians of history.
- to { *Egypt*.—Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Dynasties rule in this millennium. Step Pyramid of Saqqarah built under Third Dynasty, "oldest surviving large building." Great Pyramids built by Fourth
- 4000 { Dynasty. Under Fifth Dynasty "Papyrus of Accounts." Queen "Nitocris," supposed original of Cinderella.
- to { *Mesopotamia*.—Kingdoms of Shurpura, Guti, Agade, Erech, &c.; with much culture and a good deal of imperialism.
- 3000 { *Egypt*.—Sixth to Seventeenth Dynasties. Incursions of nomads begin, and foundation of Theban Kingdom as a result. Voyages to Punt and Ophir. Construction of Lake Moeris. Invasion of Hyksos.
- to { *Mesopotamia*.—Kingdom of Babylonia definitely emerges. Code of Khammurabi.
- 2000 { *Egypt*.—Hyksos rule for 500 years. Syrian influences in Egypt. Amenhotep IV institutes Monotheism. Tut-Ankh-Amen, whose tomb was discovered in 1922. Hittites warred against. Rameses the Great. Tanite Dynasty.
- to { *Mesopotamia*.—Elamites establish a Dynasty. Origin and development of Assyria. Babylon taken but recaptured. Appearance in history of Jews, Phœnicians, Persians, Hindus, Chinese, and Japanese.
- to { *Egypt*.—Mercenaries used by Tanites. Shashanq (Libyan) invades Palestine. Feudalism reasserts itself. Ethiopian invasion. Assyrian invasion. Petty kingdoms in Delta. Psamthek throws off Assyrian yoke, and opens up country. Defeat of Jews at Megiddo. Nebuchadrezzar defeats Egyptians. Persian invasion—end of Egyptian independence.
- 1000 { *Mesopotamia*.—Assyria at height of its power (about 700 B.C.). Capture of Nineveh by "Scythians."
- to { *Jews*.—Reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon. Division of the Kingdom. Deportation by Assyrians and Babylonians. Restoration under Cyrus.
- to { *India*.—Brahmanism in India. Buddha renounces the world (about 532 B.C.).
- to { *China*.—Magnetic needle known about 1000 B.C. Tatar invasions. Lao-tse. Confucius. Chow Dynasty.
- to { *Persia*.—Cyrus creates first "world-power" stretching from India to Greece.
- 500 { *Greece*.—Homeric age on mainland. High civilisation in Crete.
- to { *Rome*.—Tarquins expelled (about 510 B.C.).

- B.C.** { *Japan*.—Reigns of successors of Jimmu (first traditional emperor).  
*China*.—Feudalism as a result of Hunnish invasions.  
*India*.—Magadha (Buddha's Kingdom).  
500 { *Persia*.—Continues to be greatest power in the world.  
*Greece*.—"Republics" flourishing. Persians defeated. Peloponnesian War. Sparta triumphant. Retreat of the Ten Thousand.  
*Rome*.—Strife between patricians and plebeians. Struggles with Sabines, Æquians, Volscians, and Etruscans.
- to { *Japan*.—Fights against savages. A census taken. Taxes on textiles, &c. Irrigation and shipbuilding.  
*China*.—Feudalism continues.  
*India*.—Invasion by Alexander the Great. Maurya Dynasty founded by Chandragupta.  
400 { *Persia*.—Invaded by Alexander the Great. Foundation of Seleucid Dynasty.  
*Greece*.—Epaminondas. Alexander the Great. Antigonid Dynasty in Greece.  
*Rome*.—"Gaulish terror." Licinian Rogations. End of strife between patricians and plebeians. Samnites being gradually defeated.
- 300 { *Japan*.—Great earthquake (about 286 B.C.).  
*China*.—Chow Dynasty ends. Shi-hwang-ti "first universal emperor." Great wall built. Burning of books and persecution of *literati*. Han Dynasty founded.  
*India*.—Reign of Asoka.  
*Post-Alexandrian Empires*.—Wars of Generals. Emergence of Parthia-Grecian Leagues.  
*Rome*.—"Pyrrhic victories." First Punic War. Cis-Alpine Gauls defeated. Invasion and defeat of Hannibal.
- to { *Japan*.—Development of agriculture and fishing (?).  
*China*.—Han Dynasty makes headway against barbarians and has relations overland with India.  
*India*.—Supposed retreat of Buddhism before Brahmanism.  
200 { Invasion of "Indo-Scythians."  
*Post-Alexandrian Empires*.—Parthians worry Seleucids. Maccabees in Palestine. Ptolemies in Egypt. Romans in Greece.  
*Rome*.—Expansion in North Italy, Greece, and Iberia. Third Punic War. Carthage destroyed. Cato "the Censor." Slave War in Sicily. Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus. Jugurthine War. Marius defeats Teutons. Second servile war in Sicily.
- to { *Japan*.—(Nothing certain.)  
*China*.—Han Dynasty controls Turkestan. Commercial relations with Persia and Rome.  
*India*.—Brahmanical reaction. Many obscure Dynasties.  
100 { *The Near East*.—Rome attacks Selucid Empire—Pergamus aggrandised and "bequeathed" to the Republic. Mithridates fights against Rome. Cleopatra—end of Ptolemaic Dynasty.  
*Rome*.—"Social War." Conflicts of Marius and Sulla. Sullan constitution. Catiline's plot. Cicero. Pompey's campaign against pirates and Mithridates. Cæsar in Gaul. "First Triumvirate." Crassus killed in battle with Parthians. Battle of Pharsalia. Death of Pompey. Assassination of Cæsar. "Second Triumvirate."  
1 { Supremacy of Augustus.

- A.D. 1 { *Japan*.—Kings cease to be nomadic. Wrestling begun.  
*China*.—Han Dynasty splits up. Examination system begins.  
*India*.—Involved in barbaric turmoils.  
*The Near East*.—Armenia semi-independent, between Parthia and Rome.  
*Rome*.—Defeat of legions in Germany. Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero (end of Cæsarian line). Vespasian, Titus, and Trajan.
- to { *Japan*.—Empress Jingo. Invasion of Korea.  
*China*.—Decline of Eastern Hans.  
*India*.—Country in touch with Rome in Trajan's time.  
100 { *The Near East*.—Parthia assaulted by Trajan. Hadrian restores conquests.  
*Rome*.—The "Good Emperors" (Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius), Commodus. Empire put up to auction. Septimius Severus.
- to { *Japan*.—Progress of shipbuilding.  
*China*.—"The Three Kingdoms." Ambassadors from Diocletian at Chinese Court.  
200 { *India*.—Native Dynasties push through Pamirs.  
*Persia*.—Fall of Parthian Empire. Beginning of Sassanid Dynasty. Religious intolerance.  
*Rome*.—Much confusion in the succession. Extension of Franchise under Caracalla. But perhaps development rather than "decay."
- to { *Japan*.—Korean influences; a census of production.  
*China*.—Invasion of Hiung-nu.  
300 { *India*.—Reconstitution of great empire under Chandragupta I.  
*Persia*.—Fights with Rome and "Huns."  
*Rome*.—Diocletian reforms government. Constantine's conversion to Christianity. Adoption of Constantinople as Capital. Arius and Athanasius. Julian the Apostate.
- to { *Japan*.—Clearer historical definition in this century, caste, nobles, administration of justice, good and bad emperors.  
*China*.—Disunity in empire.  
*India*.—Pilgrimage of Fa-hien, Chinese Buddhist monk. Invasion of "White Huns."  
400 { *Persia*.—Bahram, "the wild ass"; Invasion of "White Huns."  
*Byzantium*.—Byzantines defeated by Goths but Constantinople impregnable.  
*Rome*.—Invasion of Huns. Gothic invasions as a consequence. Fall of Carthage and Rome. Alaric and Genseric. Clovis in France.
- to { *Japan*.—Introduction of Buddhism.  
*China*.—Reunion under Suy Dynasty.  
*India*.—"White Huns" defeated by native Dynasties.  
500 { *Persia*.—Kavadh and Chosroes.  
*Byzantium*.—Justinian and Theodora. Belisarius and Narses. Victories in Africa and Italy.
- to { *Italy*.—Theodoric the Ostrogoth. Lombard Invasion.  
*France*.—Unity under Merovingians.  
600 { *Spain*.—Hollowness of Visigothic rule. Religious persecutions.  
*Britain*.—Invasion of Jutes, Angles, and Saxons.

- A.D. { *Japan*.—Great progress under Korean and Chinese impulses.  
*China*.—Progress under political reintegration.  
*India*.—New Dynasties. Beginning of Mohammedan raids.  
*Persia*.—Chosroes "the conqueror." Conquest by Saracens.  
*Saracens*.—Mohammedan Conquests in Asia Minor, Persia, Egypt, and North Africa.
- 600 { *Byzantium*.—Decline checked by Heraclius. Siege of Constantinople frustrated by "Greek fire."  
*Italy*.—Struggle between Byzantines, Lombards, and Pope.  
*France*.—Emergence of "Mayor of the Palace."  
*Spain*.—Religious persecutions set up disaffection.  
*Britain*.—Many Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms. Introduction of Christianity.
- 700 { *Japan*.—Development of Buddhism.  
*China*.—T'ang Dynasty.  
*India*.—Great confusion. More Mohammedan raids.  
*Saracens*.—Opposition between Syria and Iran. Ommayyad Dynasty at first successful. Abbasid, based on Persia, overthrows it. Foundation of Bagdad. Expansion of cult.  
*Byzantium*.—Assaults by Bulgarians and Saracens. Iconoclasm.  
*Italy*.—Lombards destroyed by Pepin and Charlemagne. Inauguration of Holy Roman Empire.  
*France*.—Charles Martel, Pepin, and Charlemagne.  
*Spain*.—Conquest by Moors.  
*Britain*.—Danish invasions begin.
- 800 { *Japan*.—Advance of Fujiwara family.  
*China*.—Buddhism is persecuted but revives.  
*India*.—Country apparently quiet.  
*Saracens*.—Augustan age of literature. Turkish intrusions.  
*Byzantium*.—Restoration of Image Worship. Constantinople still flourishing.  
*Italy*.—Commencement of "Republics."  
*France*.—Treaty of Verdun. Invasion of Norsemen.  
*Spain*.—Obscure beginnings of Christian reconquest.  
*Britain*.—Danish invasions. Alfred the Great.
- 900 { *Japan*.—Rise of Taira and Minamoto Clans.  
*China*.—Political disorder, but *Printing* discovered.  
*India*.—Ghaznevid Dynasty.  
*Saracens*.—Advance of Seljuks. Fatimite Dynasty in Egypt.  
*Byzantium*.—"Basil slayer of the Bulgarians." Raids by Hungarians and Norsemen.  
*Italy*.—Development of Republicanism, Venice leading.  
*France*.—Rollo in Normandy. Capet Dynasty begins.  
*Spain*.—Increasing definition of Christian states. Brilliant reign of Abderahman III of Cordova.  
*Britain*.—Recrudescence of Danish power.
- 1000 { *Japan*.—Clan advance against Fujiwara family. Development of native style of painting.  
*China*.—Advance of Tatars.  
*India*.—Spoliation under Sultan Mahmud the Ghaznevid.  
*Saracens*.—Seljukian Dynasties. Firdousi. Omar Khayyām.  
*Byzantium*.—Crusades—fomented by Constantinople to begin with.  
*Germany*.—Henry IV's contest with Pope Gregory VII.

- A.D. { *Italy*.—Development of towns and commerce, despite political distractions.  
*France*.—Slow development of Capet Dynasty.  
1000 { *Spain*.—Ebb and flow in struggle with Moors. Invasion of Almoravides. The Cid. Development of towns.  
*Britain*.—Macbeth in Scotland. Canute in England. Norman Conquest.
- to { *Japan*.—Advance of Minamoto Clan and Feudalism.  
*China*.—Tatars in China. Kin or "Golden" Dynasty in North. Sung in South.  
*India*.—Foundation of Ghori Dynasty.  
*Saracens*.—Repulse of Second and Third Crusades.  
1100 { *Byzantium*.—Decline of power through general European advance.  
*Germany*.—Barbarossa.  
*Italy*.—Strife of Republics. Climax of Papal power under Innocent.  
*France*.—Philip Augustus. Capture of English possessions.  
*Spain*.—Rise of Portugal, Castille, and Aragon.  
*Britain*.—Wars of Stephen and Matilda.
- to { *Japan*.—Advance of Hojo Clan. Curious political balance of things.  
*China*.—Ghenghis Khan's destructiveness. Kublai Khan's reconstruction.  
*India*.—Foundation of Delhi. "Slave Dynasty."  
*Persia*.—Reconstruction follows Mongol invasion.  
*Syria and Egypt*.—Disappearance of Seljuks. Saladin. Mameluke Dynasty.  
1200 { *Byzantium*.—Foundation and destruction of the "Latin" empire.  
*Germany*.—Reign of Frederick II. ("Stupor mundi.") Collapse of his dynasty.  
*Italy*.—Great political instability, but high civilisation. Dante.  
*France*.—St. Louis. Destruction of Albigenian culture.  
*Spain*.—"Decisive" battle of Navas de Tolosa. Moors confined to south corner of peninsula.  
*Britain*.—Alexander III in Scotland. William Wallace. Magna Carta in England. Edward I "greatest of the Plantagenets."
- to { *Japan*.—Breakdown of Hojo supremacy. Assertion of Emperor Go-Diogo.  
*China*.—Mongol Dynasty upset by Secret Societies. "Bright" Dynasty founded by labourer's son.  
*India*.—Ala-ud-din great plundering conqueror.  
*Persia*.—Invasion of Timur ("Tamerlane").  
*Byzantium*.—Continued decline despite use of mercenaries.  
1300 { *Germany*.—Teutonic Orders. Hanseatic League. Strife between communes and country. Rise of Swiss Cantons.  
*Italy*.—Assertion of territorial aristocracy against communes. Predominance of Florence. Rienzi, Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch.  
*France*.—Hundred Years' War. Papacy at Avignon.  
*Spain*.—"Hermandados." Pedro the Cruel.  
*Britain*.—Battle of Bannockburn. King Edward III. Wars with France. Lollardism. Wat Tyler.
- to { Printing, Gunpowder, and the Discovery of America begin to create the modern world.  
1400 { Capture of Constantinople by Turks.  
Wars of Roses in England.



- A.D. 1400 { Jesuits in Japan.  
Mogul dynasty in India (Akbar).  
Persia imperialistic.  
Turks expanding in Europe.  
to { Austrian consolidation.  
Russians expel "Golden Horde."  
Charles V Emperor—Francis in France.  
Henry VIII in England.  
1500 { Reform movements in Europe.  
Great Art in Italy. Leonardo da Vinci, &c.  
Camoens in Portugal.  
Cervantes in Spain.  
Montaigne and Rabelais in France.  
Copernicus in Poland.  
Hans Sachs and Erasmus in Germany.  
Shakespeare in England.  
to { Spanish barbarities in America.
- 1600 { Manchu conquest of China.  
Aurangzeb in India.  
Persians take Ormuz from Portuguese.  
Turkish grand viziers. Greek Kuprili.  
Peter the Great in Russia.  
John Sobieski in Poland.  
Thirty Years' War in Germany.  
Cardinal Richelieu and Louis XIV in France.  
Portugal reasserts her independence.  
Spain under Philip II.  
Union of Crowns in Britain. Struggles of King and Parliament—  
Oliver Cromwell. Stuart Restoration and final dethronement.  
French in St. Lawrence.  
British in New England and interesting Colonial development.
- to { China under Manchus.  
Japan living isolated.  
Clive and Warren Hastings in India.  
Nadir Shah in Persia.  
Turkey loses Hungary, which becomes Austrian.  
Peter the Great and Charles XII of Sweden.  
1700 { Rise of Prussia in Germany.  
Frederick the Great.  
Maria Theresa in Austria.  
Spain under the Bourbons.  
The French Revolution.  
to { Hanoverians in Britain.  
War of Independence in America.
- 1800 { The "wonderful century." Great advance in Science and Art.  
Napoleonic Wars in beginning of century. Revolutions and  
Wars of Liberation in Europe and America. Civil War in United  
States. Nationalism and Imperialism in grips at the end of the  
to { century.
- 1900 { Great efforts after peace in the beginning of this century. But  
armaments increasing all the same; and conflict of interests,  
to { ostensibly in connection with Near East but going much deeper,  
leads to "The Greatest War in world-history." Its consequences  
as terrible an issue for victors as for vanquished, especially in rela-  
tion to *Indemnities*—the great unsolved problem of the hour,  
1923 {

## NOTES ON BOOKS

## CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

Hann's *Hand Book of Climatology*, translated by R. de Courcy Ward, remains authoritative. Interesting also is Mr. Ward's own work, *Climate in its Relation to Man*. Professor Ellsworth Huntington's *Civilization and Climate* concerns itself largely with the question of human energy in relation to Climate, and indicates how favourably placed the British Islands are from this point of view. Miss Semple's *Influences of Geographic Environment* deals in admirable dynamic fashion with all the relations between man and his surroundings. Reclus' *Universal Geography* is still worth consulting regarding the more stable features of the subject dealt with, as also his *L'Homme et la Terre*. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* also deals with Climate and Geography in its articles on the various continents and countries of the world. See also Fairgrieve's *Geography and World Power*.

## ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

Professor Tylor's *Primitive Culture* remains a highly commendable book in this connection, as does Ratzel's *History of Mankind*. The latter work is really a "Description" rather than a history, and minutely delineates all the peoples of to-day. A word of caution should be uttered as to Ratzel's views on "Race." Ward's *Pure Sociology* and *Applied Sociology* are valuable as regards the evolution of human institutions. For the reader who knows French, Letourneau's works are a mine of information regarding Religion, Law, the Family and Marriage, Women, Property, Politics, Literature, War, Slavery, Commerce, and Education. For the exposure of the fallacies connected with "Race," the best works are Finot's *Race Prejudice*, Oakesmith's *Race and Nationality*, and Robertson's *Saxon and Celt*. Mr. Robertson's *Evolution of States* is also extremely instructive as to the evolution and destiny of institutions and nations.

## NOMADISM

Since barbarism always implies illiteracy in the nature of the case, we have no history of Nomadism *from within*, while the civilised chronicles are far from being trustworthy. We have therefore to judge of the invasions of Huns, Bulgars, &c., on the general principles indicated in the text. Professor Peisker's contributions to the *Cambridge Mediæval History* regarding Asiatic Nomadism are very instructive. Howorth's *History of the Mongols* takes practically no account of causation. No book known to the writer links up climate with psychology in the fashion elaborated in the text, nor even makes an attempt to account for the supersession of Nomadism as hereinbefore indicated. Nicolai, however, in *The Biology of War*, following other German writers, indicates how the Mongol invasion implied advance in Science on its material side.

## ANCIENT HISTORY

No books known to the writer account for the civilised primacy of Egypt and Mesopotamia in terms of relative freedom from Nomadism as urged in the foregoing pages. Since new discoveries are being made every year the history of the primary civilisations will probably require constant revision for centuries to come. Meantime the best work in English on popular lines is perhaps Breasted's *Ancient History*. As

regards China, Japan, and Persia, the writer has already said enough by way of reproach in the text. He can only acknowledge that he had mainly to follow the *Encyclopædia Britannica* as regards these three countries. As to India, besides the article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the reader should consult the works of Vincent A. Smith. As to Greece, Grote's *History* will perhaps remain a classic, but it is becoming more and more insufficient as regards "prehistory." Mommsen is indispensable for much of Roman history, but the really great work of Duruy is much more to be commended. Ferrero is extremely bright, but not too reliable. For later Roman history, Gibbon is likely to remain supreme.

#### MODERN HISTORY

In the foregoing work the writer has pointed out that the "Dark Ages," so called, had reference only to a small part of Europe, and that as, at the same time, other parts of Eurasia became lightened up with the fresh Saracenic effulgence there was no general depression at work. In any case, the view here is that "Modern" history might be said to begin with the barbaric invasions, the "Middle Ages" being an unfortunate name that is growing less and less applicable as time goes on. For this period the writer has found the works of Fustel de Coulanges (*Histoire des Institutions politiques de l'ancienne France*) most profitable, especially in relation to the still much-discussed institution of "Feudalism." The history which tends to supersede others as regards modern times is Lavissee and Rambaud's admirable *Histoire générale du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle à nos jours*. The *Cambridge Mediæval and Modern Histories* are also very notable works. Since every country has specialised in its own history in modern times, details are too numerous to mention here. Reference, however, might be made to Prescott's works regarding the history of Mexico and Peru, and Parkman's stirring essays in North American history. Sir Clements R. Markham's works should be consulted as supplementing and correcting Prescott as regards Peru. It should also be noted that the *Encyclopædia Britannica* gives excellent summaries of the history of all modern states. Mr. H. G. Wells' *Outline of History* is a conspectus of the most stimulating kind. It flashed upon the world with an electric power which, if not quite unique, had behind it a scientific force and a scholarly backing which have lifted the subject to new levels. It should perhaps be stated that the present work was written before the appearance of Mr. Wells' book, which can hardly have a rival on its special lines. In conclusion, it should be explained that the above references are only to the *main* works upon which the author has relied—an exhaustive bibliography not being considered necessary here.



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